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EUROPE AND WEST AFRICA

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
HEATH CLARK LECTURES, 1970
delivered at
The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

Europe and West Africa

Some Problems and Adjustments

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE foundation of the Heath Clark lectures in the University of London in 1929 was due to the benefaction of the late Mr. Charles Heath Clark, a public-spirited business man, who devoted his leisure to the service of his fellow men, particularly in the fields of education and public health. The Senate of the University, in accepting the trust, agreed that:

‘The general scope of the lectures to be given shall include the educational, cultural, and humanistic aspects (as opposed to technical and manipulative training) of the History, Development, and Progress of Preventive Medicine and Tropical Hygiene and their sanitary and social evolution both in temperate and tropical climates.’

The lectures given in 1939 are the eighth of the series.

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PART I

By C. K. MEEK, M.A., D.Sc.

THE CHANGING CULTURES OF WEST AFRICA

THE two lectures which I was invited to deliver under the Heath Clark Trust formed an introduction to a series in two successive years, dealing with some of the problems arising from the impact of European civilization on West Africa. It appeared appropriate, therefore, that I should attempt to present a broad outline of the cultural background of West Africa, and to indicate some of the ways in which the various types of native cultures were reacting, or appeared to be reacting, to the effects of European intrusion.

I may say at the outset that my own experience of West Africa is confined to Nigeria, and most of my data will, therefore, be taken from that country—a country which is by far the most populous unit of the British Empire, with the sole exception of India.¹

It is hardly necessary to emphasize the urgency of the study of culture-contact problems in West Africa. Here the British have assumed responsibility for the welfare of some twenty-five million Africans, and the French for almost as many. A few of these people, fringing the coast, have had some degree of contact with European civilization ever since Portugal began to send trading vessels to the West Coast during the latter half of the fifteenth century; but the vast majority of West African peoples are only just emerging from a secluded world in which the conditions of life were often little different from those of remote prehistoric times; and they are being precipitated into a whirlpool of world industrialization and of social concepts which have had no place in their own limited scheme of life.

A people's culture is the expression of its efforts to evolve a mode of life suitable to its environment, and any modi-

¹ The 1931 Census returns for Nigeria showed a total population of 19,928,171. But the Government Statistician's estimate was 21,902,000. See *Census of Nigeria, 1931*, p. 23.

fication in the environment demands a corresponding modification in the culture. No culture is ever completely stationary, but normally changes occur gradually and adjustments are made almost imperceptibly. In West Africa, however, the changes have been so swift that in many cases the people have scarcely had time in which to devise methods of readjustment or of balancing the various conflicting interests. Thus, to take a few examples, the sudden abolition in many tribes of certain forms of marriage, which are now considered by the younger generation to be a sign of cultural inferiority, has upset the balance of authority between the social group of the father and that of the mother. This will be explained in detail in my second lecture. Again, matrilineal peoples, that is to say those in which inheritance is reckoned in the female line, are being compelled by new conditions to become patrilineal, that is with inheritance in the male line; and I have even come across tribes in which one-half of the tribe is clinging to the old principle while the other has gone over to the new. The spread of Christianity, in creating a new moral atmosphere, is destroying the traditional methods of moulding character, and parents and children are often at loggerheads. The old legal sanctions in the pagan tribes are losing their validity. They were based on the belief in magic. Property was protected by means of magical charms, and it was magic which gave efficacy to the judicial oath, one of the surest guarantees of honesty and good conduct. In the sphere of education there are almost insuperable difficulties in attempting to adjust the educational system to conditions of life which are everywhere in a state of flux. In the economic sphere the switch-over from a subsistence to a money economy, a process accelerated by the institution of direct taxation, has upset many of the old standards of values. It has created new ambitions and new methods of building up reserves, and of mobilizing wealth. The growing of crops for export, while raising the standard of living, is raising also new problems of land tenure, wage labour, and local shortages of food. The mere opening up of communications, which entails not only the spread of European culture but

that of superior native cultures, is tending to destroy the individuality of hundreds of small tribal units. Everywhere these small units are abandoning their tribal markings, their own peculiar systems of marriage, and other distinctive cultural characteristics.

For some of the present-day difficulties there can be no remedy at all. Many institutions, and, in some cases, even communities, will disappear. Numerous communities have already dwindled or disappeared as a result of a reversal in the flow of trade, and it is unlikely that, even in the most favourable circumstances, small groups, like the two hundred minor tribes of Northern Nigeria, can all continue to exist indefinitely as separate tribal entities. They will be absorbed into larger societies. In other cases difficulties will solve themselves automatically. The schoolboys of to-day will be the elders of to-morrow. And the West African has shown amazing adaptability. But in other cases, again, the measure of success in adjustment will depend largely on administrative policy. And here it would seem that there is a need for greater co-ordination of Government policies in West Africa. It is sometimes held that the policy of Indirect Rule, which is a feature of the British system in Nigeria, is a hindrance to the African's progress, on the ground that this policy is based on institutions which are out of date. Yet Indirect Rule is merely another name for local self-government, and is a means of enlisting the co-operation of the people through their own *living* institutions. It is, therefore, the surest means of securing successful adjustment to new conditions. It is a safeguard against the degeneration of societies into mere collections of individuals, and is also a means of training the people in the management of their own affairs. There is, of course, the difficulty in all societies of satisfying the requirements of every section of the community, and in West Africa this difficulty is intensified by the immense variations in the cultural levels. For this reason native administration policies must be framed on the broadest bases, so that, as a Dutch writer has put it, the synthesis may be the conjunction of all healthy

forces, and not the chaining together of what is vital with what is doomed to die.¹

There is one other preliminary observation. In our relations with the Negro of West Africa it is not only the Negro who must adjust *his* ideas. *We* must acquire that objectivity of outlook which leads to a fuller understanding of other people. In West Africa there is, fortunately, a comparative absence of colour prejudice, and there is a very high degree of friendly co-operation between Europeans and Africans. That co-operation must become closer and more enlightened as time goes on. At one time Europeans were wont to regard Negroes as inferior beings who had been left behind in the evolutionary race—pre-logical persons, in fact, who were incapable of understanding the concept of causality. But those opinions have been killed by the closer knowledge which has in recent times been obtained of the modes of life and institutions of the Negro peoples, and it is now realized that there are few West African customs that have not had a place in the history of European civilization, and that the present backward condition of Negro culture is largely the effect of an adverse environment. Disease, slavery, poverty, malnutrition, and the inaccessibility of the country have all combined to hinder the Negro's development, and that he has been able to adapt himself to such difficult conditions is evidence of the highest intelligence. Intelligence tests, even when devised to suit European rather than African conditions, have not proved that Negro children are less intelligent, in the widest sense of the term, than white children, and there is plenty of evidence in the recent history of West Africa to show that cultural differences in language, religion, and social organization can be obliterated in the course of a single generation.

As an introduction to a discussion of the cultural situation of to-day it will be necessary to give an outline of the past history, as far as we can gather it, of West African culture. West Africa is a hotch-potch of peoples and of cultures.

¹ Dr. A. D. A. De Kat Angelino, *Colonial Policy*, vol. i, p. 40.

But we can distinguish three principal stocks, namely, Negro, Hamite or Berber, and Semite. The indigenous stock is the Negro, the Hamites and Semites being intruders from the north and east. Professor Seligman¹ has expressed the opinion that, apart from relatively late Semitic influence, the civilizations of Africa are, in the main, the civilizations of Hamites. Even if we cannot wholly agree with this, there is no doubt of the close cultural contact between the Negro peoples of West Africa and the Hamites of North and North-eastern Africa, both in ancient and in recent times. Thus it is clear that many West African cultural traits were derived from the same Hamitic source as those of ancient Egypt. In West Africa we find Divine Kings, together with a ceremony of reinvestiture and rejuvenation corresponding to the Egyptian festival known as *Sed*.² These kings were of the ancient Egyptian agricultural pattern, and since the health and virility of the kings were regarded as closely bound up with the fruitfulness of the land, they were, in times of crop failure, put to death. The complex of beliefs associated with Divine Kingship or priest chieftainship is found in other parts of the world, and must therefore answer deep-seated human needs, but the special connexion between the crops and the health of the king, with all the accompanying ritual, would appear to be peculiarly Hamitic. With Divine Kingship we find also sun-worship and forms of mummification. The customs, in many Nigerian tribes, of placing dead bodies on biers and removing the skin would seem to have no other explanation than that it was part of the mummification ritual in which the body was placed on a bier and subjected to a saline bath resulting in the complete removal of the cuticle.³ Then again, we find psychological beliefs in West African tribes identical with the Egyptian belief in a *ka* or spiritual entity

¹ *Races of Africa*, p. 96.

² See C. K. Meek, *A Sudanese Kingdom* (1931), chapter iii.

³ The bath having been given for the purpose of getting rid of fatty ingredients and preserving the tissues. See Warren R. Dawson in *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, vol. lviii, 1928. For details of the Nigerian practice see C. K. Meek, *Tribal Studies in Northern Nigeria* (1931), vol. i, pp. 196-9.

which enters the body at birth, and leaves it at death, having served the function of a guardian angel.¹ On the technological side the reed canoes and harpoons of the Buduma of Lake Chad closely resemble those depicted in Egyptian drawings, while the vertical loom, spiked wheel trap, coiled basketry, the West African harp and long-necked lute, with details of construction identical with those of ancient Egypt, and nowhere else, and not essential to harps or lutes,² are all evidence of the share of West Africa in the culture of the Hamites.

Even within historic times there has been frequent communication between West Africa and Egypt. In the eleventh century A.D. the people of Kanem, from whom Bornu derived its dynasty of kings, as well as a large proportion of its population, had, according to Makrizi, a settlement of their own at Cairo.³ And ever since then thousands of Muslim pilgrims from West Africa have annually visited and even settled in the Egyptian Sudan. One of the most interesting commentaries on the traditional tales of the foundation of states in West Africa by hero-adventurers from Egypt or the East was the dramatic conquest of the West African kingdom of Bornu, only forty-five years ago, by the Egyptian adventurer Rabeh. Rabeh was the foster-son of Zubeir Pasha who had been imprisoned at Cairo in 1870 by the Egyptian Government. After the defeat of Zubeir's son, Rabeh led a body of Negro soldiers, officered largely by Arabs from Kordofan, into Wadai and then through Bagirmi to Bornu. Here in 1893 he drove out the Sultan of Bornu and held the country in a state of subjection, until he was attacked and killed by the French in 1900.⁴

¹ See C. K. Meek, *A Sudanese Kingdom* (1931), pp. 206-8. Also *Law and Authority in a Nigerian Tribe* (1937), pp. 55-61.

² See Professor Seligman's Frazer Lecture for 1933, *Egypt and Negro Africa*, Appendix I. This Frazer lecture is a masterly review of the whole subject of Divine Kingship in Africa.

³ Ibn Said refers in the thirteenth century to Bornu as forming part of the Empire of Kanem, which, under Dunama Dibbalami, was said to embrace all the land between the banks of the Nile on the east and of the Niger on the west. Ibn Batuta, writing in 1352, says that the people east of Melle got all their clothing from Egypt.

⁴ See C. K. Meek, *The Northern Tribes of Nigeria* (1925), vol. i, p. 83.

The early years of British administration in Bornu were almost entirely devoted to repairing the ravages of Rabeh.

There must also have been continuous meetings between Hamites from the north and the Negroes south of the Sahara, just as to-day Tuareg and Tibu are to be seen mingling with Negroes in the markets of Northern Nigeria. And it was these Hamites who founded the famous kingdoms of the western Sudan, Ghana, Melle, Songhai, and the various states of Hausaland. The Hausa, it will be remembered, though now a Negro people, speak a Hamitic language.

So also, in 1805, it was Hamitic¹ Fulani who seized control of the Hausa states and continued, under a theocratic sultanate, the ancient Hamitic system of government which had stood the test of centuries and now, under British rule, forms the basis of up-to-date systems of native administration. The Hamites thus paved the way, over wide areas of West Africa, for the Europeanization of to-day. They established systems of centralized government and built walled cities. But they drove many of the conquered peoples into serfdom, and established class distinctions which extended, as in the castes of India, to certain occupations, so that even to-day it is taboo for certain classes to marry, say, the daughter of a blacksmith or a butcher. They institutionalized slavery, which remained, under Muhammadanism, the basis of the economic system, until the status of slavery was in 1901 abolished by the British Government—the greatest revolution occasioned by the European occupation and one which provides an outstanding example of subsequent successful cultural readjustment. A population of slaves was in a few years transformed into one of independent peasant farmers.²

¹ The Fulani language has only some Hamitic characteristics (such as that the governing noun precedes the genitive). But it has no grammatical gender, and no different plural form for nouns. And there is no inner vowel change. Like Bantu and some Sudanic languages, it classifies nouns by means of affixes. This almost suggests that Bantu is the result of Fulani, or a language like it, acting on Sudanic.

² See *Collected Annual Reports of Northern Nigeria 1900-1911 (passim)*. Also Lord Lugard, *The Dual Mandate* (the two chapters dealing with slavery).

Turning now to the Semitic contribution to West African culture, though we are not in these lectures concerned with ancient history, it is interesting to remember that the Carthaginians made voyages to some regions of West Africa, and there is evidence also of an overland trade from Carthage to the Western Sudan.¹ Punic characters still survive in the alphabet of the Tuareg.² Then, among the Yoruba, the theogony, or mythology of the gods, together with certain forms of art, including the famous terra-cotta heads of Ife, are all strongly suggestive of some distant Phoenician or Carthaginian connexion.³ Yet another Semitic influence, which seems to have been quite considerable in the Western Sudan before the general conversion to Muhammadanism, was that of Judaism, introduced apparently by Judaized Berber groups from North Africa or possibly from Abyssinia. The pre-Islamic kings of Songhai and Wagadu claimed descent from Solomon and David, the Taurudu were stated by Bello, the Muslim historian, to be of Jewish origin, and the leader of the Muslim attack on the Mandingo was killed by members of a tribe who were described as being of Semitic origin and the Israelitish religion. Old Testament tales, like the Esau legend and that of Samson and Delilah, are current all over the Sudan, and I have found them myself in out-of-the-way districts in Nigeria. It is clear that they are independent of Muslim tradition. But the Jews who introduced them lost their identity by absorption in the indigenous Negro population. There is another piece of West African history connected with Jews which is not, perhaps, sufficiently well known, and is of particular interest at the present time. In 1486 King João II of Portugal issued an edict that all Jews in his dominions who refused to accept Christianity should be transported to the coast of Guinea, where the Portuguese had already numerous trading settlements. Thousands of Portuguese Jews were, in consequence, sent to the West Coast, and many married Negro

¹ Herodotus iv. 196; Periplus; H. R. Palmer, *The Carthaginian Voyages, &c.* (Bathurst, 1931); E. W. Bovill, *Caravans of the Old Sahara* (1933).

² See, e.g., F. R. Rodd, *People of the Veil* (1926), p. 267.

³ For a summary of some of the views on the Ife figurines see W. D. Hambly, *Culture Areas of Nigeria*, pp. 466-8.

women, their descendants proudly claiming to be Portuguese. In particular, a large group settled in the island of San Thomé,¹ and it may have been descendants of these who first began to cultivate cocoa, the development of which in recent years has made West Africa the chief source of the world's supplies of cocoa, and has had an immense effect, as we shall see later, on the economic and social life of the peoples of the Gold Coast.

The absorption of Berberized and Portuguese Jews into Negro society reminds us of another example of absorption which is still going on. In 1805 the Fulani began a *jihad*, or Muslim holy war, in Hausaland, and conquered every one of the Hausa states, consolidating all into a single sultanate with its centre at Sokoto.² It was a remarkable achievement that small groups of Hamitic herdsmen, scattered over an immense area, should, by their unity, discipline, and steadfastness of purpose, have brought into subjection some five or six million Negroes who were themselves possessed of a highly developed culture. But through intermarriage with the Hausa, a people who have long exercised a social rather than a political dominance in West Africa, those Fulani who conquered Hausaland have now almost abandoned their language in favour of Hausa, and are fast becoming Negroes, physically and culturally. This is a good illustration of the difficulty of classifying peoples on any hard-and-fast basis of physical or even of linguistic and cultural traits. There is, of course, considerable correlation between physical appearance, language, and culture, and we can in general differentiate between Negroes and, say, Hamites: but hundreds of years of invasion, intermarriage, and migration, to say nothing of the imperceptible and almost impersonal transmission of cultural traits, have blunted distinctions, except in the more

¹ See Mary H. Kingsley, *West African Studies* (1901), p. 475. Sir Harry Johnston points out (*The Colonisation of Africa*, p. 81) that the treatment of the Jews was gross ingratitude, as they had done much to create the Portuguese empire beyond the seas.

² See Mohammed Bello, *The Rise of the Sokoto Fulani*, trans. E. J. Arnett (Kano, 1919); E. W. Bovill, *Caravans of the Old Sahara* (1933), chap. xx; S. J. Hogben, *The Muhammadan Emirates of Northern Nigeria* (1930).

secluded areas of mountain and of forest. There are, for example, in West Africa, Fulani of almost every conceivable type, from thin-lipped, straight-haired, and even blue-eyed Hamites, to full-blooded Negroes. There are pagan Fulani and Muslim Fulani. There are nomad and cattle-owning Fulani, and there are settled Fulani who have become the dominant caste among the indigenous agricultural peoples. On the linguistic side, also, we shall see that, though we may divide West African languages broadly into three main groups, namely Sudanic, Bantu, and Hamitic, the distinctions between them tend to break down on close examination. For Bantu passes easily into Semi-Bantu, which is regarded as a classifying form of Sudanic; and, though the Hausa language is, for morphological reasons, classed as Hamitic, its vocabulary is for the most part Sudanic. A close comparison between Sudanic and Bantu shows also that these two families are much akin in formative elements and in vocabulary, both having drawn from a common source of Nigritic roots.

But to return to Semitic influence, there are at the present time in West Africa few who can properly be classed as Semites. In the Chad regions there are some eighty thousand Shuwa Arabs, and, as always in the past, there are many individual Arab traders and teachers from North Africa and the East. But the extent of Semitic influence is not to be measured by the number of those who carry Semitic blood in their veins. The whole of West Africa has been impregnated with Arabic culture, carried by the Muhammadan religion. In the seventh century, Arabs made the first conquest of North Africa; but it was not until several centuries later that Muhammadanism was carried across the Sahara to the Tuareg and the Negro kingdoms on the Niger. And with it was established a regular caravan trade between the Mediterranean and the most remote regions of West Africa. European trade goods, mostly cloth, metal articles, and Venetian glass, were brought, in return for slaves, gold, ivory, and leather-work. In Timbuktu and Gao there were large communities of Arab traders and teachers; and about A.D. 1500 El Maghili,

the famous Muslim scholar and missionary, found his way to Timbuktu and Hausaland, where he laid firmly the foundations of Muhammadanism.¹ And so, in Northern Nigeria to-day, a country with a population of eleven and a half millions, two-thirds of the people are Muhammadan. The ruling classes are Muhammadan, and all who profess to have any learning at all speak Arabic. The Hausa language, which is a lingua franca over a large part of West Africa, is written in Arabic characters, and its vocabulary includes hundreds of words of Arabic origin. Muhammadanism, being a social as well as a religious system, has also profoundly affected the social institutions of innumerable tribes, and it has had a widespread effect, perhaps nowadays rather a sterilizing effect, on the arts and crafts of West Africa. It introduced new standards of conduct and of dress, and conferred on its followers dignity and self-respect. By its insistence on sobriety, and its prohibition of practices such as blood revenge and cannibalism, it raised numerous barbarous tribes to a higher level of civilization and welded them all together into one harmonious whole. Thus Muhammadanism, or Semitic culture, has made the way easy for the reception of Western civilization.

It is not to be inferred that Muhammadanism in West Africa is a spent force. For, in spite of the preponderating influence of the West, communication between West Africa and the East is becoming easier every day. There is little danger now in making the pilgrimage to Mecca, and in the future, with the help of motor-cars and aeroplanes, the journey will become, for those who can afford it, a matter of days and not of months. We cannot expect, therefore, that the character of West African Muhammadanism will remain untouched by the new liberalism, such as is found in Egypt and Turkey, or that, while public administration is being carried on according to the modern standards of the

¹ At the request of Muhammad Rimfa, the Emir of Kano (c. 1500), El Maghili wrote a treatise on government which has recently been translated into English by T. H. Baldwin under the title *The Obligations of Princes*, 2 vols., Beyrouth, 1932.

West, religious institutions will adhere to the standards of the Middle Ages. Yet there is a real danger that these institutions may lag behind, and that in predominantly Muslim areas, like Northern Nigeria, the Muslims may see non-Muslims progress in all directions, and become the industrial masters of the country. West African Muhammadans have, therefore, to face the problem of reconciling their religious institutions with modern culture. Muslim law, for example, will have to keep pace with the new commercial conditions, and must obviously obtain assistance from English mercantile law. Here, then, is another problem of adjustment. It has not been overlooked by the Administration, and many reforms have been introduced. But if reforms are to be effective, the initiative and driving power must come from the people themselves. In the matter of education, for example, the antiquated system of instruction, in the so-called Koranic schools, will require drastic reformation if it is not to remain an impediment to progress.¹

Coming now to the indigenous Negro stock, as we shall be dealing later with the Negro institutions, it will be sufficient here to make a brief reference to the main linguistic divisions of West Africa. All our classifications of the various Negro tribes of West Africa are made on a linguistic basis. This is, of course, scientifically unsatisfactory, since people may change their language without changing their culture or physical characteristics, and people speaking the same language may be poles apart culturally. Moreover, dialectical differences may be so marked that groups of the same tribe living in close proximity may have difficulty in understanding one another. But the linguistic basis is the best that can be used, and it is generally true to say that those speaking the same language share, or tend to share, the same culture.

Now, apart from the Hausa, who speak a language which

¹ There are some 37,000 of these 'schools' in which the pupils, sitting by day under the shade of a large tree or by night round a log fire, are taught little but the memorizing of long passages from the Koran, the meaning of which is seldom understood. See Meek, *The Northern Tribes of Nigeria*, vol. ii, pp. 8 and 9.

is classed as Hamitic,¹ all the Negro tribes are included in a single organic family now commonly known as Sudanic, of which the main characteristics are its monosyllabic basis, absence of inflexions, and marked prominence of tone. I may say, in passing, that this prominence of tone—and by tone I mean that a single word may carry several different meanings according to the variety of tones used, that every word in the language has its own tone or tone pattern, and that tone patterns may be changed for grammatical or other reasons—makes it extremely difficult for a European to learn a Sudanic language. This in turn handicaps administration, as it is obviously necessary that every administrative official, working in a large tribal group, should be able to speak the language fluently. The ease with which the Hausa language can be acquired, owing to the comparative absence of tones, has been of great assistance to administration in Northern Nigeria, where most European officers use Hausa as the normal means of communication. It is only in recent years that attention has been directed to the study of tones, and when this study has been advanced and systematized, it should enable Europeans to acquire a better working knowledge of the native language. There is an urgent need also for dictionaries of many important languages. There is still, for example, no adequate Ibo-English dictionary, though the Ibo are one of the largest and most progressive tribes in Africa.

Professor Westermann divides the Sudanic linguistic family into four main groups.² But these cannot be re-

¹ On the ground that it possesses certain Hamitic features, such as the use of grammatical gender and of inflexion by internal vowel-change.

² The first, known as the Kwa group, extends along the coast from Liberia to eastern Nigeria, and includes important tribes like the Ewe, Twi, Fanti, Yoruba, Nupe, Edo, and Ibo. The second is the large western block of Mandingo, and includes the Mende of Sierra Leone. The third group includes the languages of north-eastern Nigeria and extends to the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan; while the last group, which Professor Westermann describes as 'class' languages, is a belt extending the whole way from Kordofan to Sierra Leone, and embraces at least one hundred Nigerian languages, some Togoland languages, the huge Mossi-Barba group in French territory, Temne in Sierra Leone, and Wolof in Gambia. See Diedrich Westermann, *Die westlichen Sudansprachen*, Berlin, 1927. Also C. K. Meek, *The Northern Tribes of Nigeria*, vol. ii, pp. 132-47.

garded as watertight compartments. Some of the languages included by Professor Westermann as 'class' Sudanic might just as well be regarded as Bantu. Ekoi, for example, in the Southern Provinces of Nigeria, and a whole group of languages in the northern provinces, have most of the characteristics of Bantu languages.¹ The Bantu belt, in fact, extends well into West Africa, and does not, as is commonly supposed, stop short east of the Bight of Benin; and for this reason ethnographers who classify West African peoples as true Negroes, in contrast with the Bantu of other parts of Africa, are, in my opinion, making an unwarranted distinction. Not all languages which are classed as Sudanic are in fact monosyllabic, and there are so many intermediate forms that it is often difficult to say where one group begins and another ends.² Language is a living thing which grows and changes, and one of the most obvious ways in which this appears to-day is the wholesale adoption of English words, as well as the invention of vernacular words to express new concepts introduced by European culture.

To complete this preliminary sketch, a few words must be said about the history of European contact with West Africa. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Italians were already engaged in overland trade with countries south of the Sahara, and in 1405 a Frenchman, Anselm d'Isalguier of Toulouse, had reached Gao on the Niger.³ But it was the Portuguese, under the inspiration and direction of Henry the Navigator, who first fully explored the coast itself.⁴

¹ Such as the classification of nouns by means of pronominal affixes, the use of the concord between noun and verb or adjective, and the employment of a vocabulary which is common to Bantu languages.

² Indeed I have found two dialects of the same language diverging to such an extent that, in time, they may be included in two distinct language divisions. Professor Werner has observed that, although Fante is a dialect of Twi, it is manifesting, unlike Twi, characteristics of an inflected language. See *Structure and Relationship of African Languages*, p. 26.

³ See M. C. de la Rancière, *La Découverte de l'Afrique au moyen âge* (1925), vol. iii, pp. 1-6.

⁴ It is claimed, however, by some French writers that merchants of Dieppe and Rouen had established trade relations with West Africa in the fourteenth century—see C. Raymond Beazley's *The Dawn of Modern Geography*, vol. iii, pp. 431, 436, 439.

The Senegal was discovered in 1445, and some of its people were already professing Muslims when Cadamosto, the Italian traveller, visited them in the year 1453. In 1458 Henry sent a mission to the Gambia to teach Christianity to the Negroes there. By 1480 the whole of the Guinea Coast was known, and Portugal had established numerous forts and trading stations. Portugal had now begun to tap the old Sahara caravan trade in alluvial gold. She had also embarked on the trade in slaves, which was to prove so lucrative after the discovery of America. By 1455 over seven hundred slaves were being imported annually into Portugal, and in the next century the value of the trade in slaves, as well as in gold, ivory, spices, and other commodities, had begun to excite the envy of almost every ship-owner in Europe.

It is an interesting reflection that the slave trade carried on by Portugal with the Americas led directly to two of the main sources of the West African Negro's wealth to-day. Ground-nuts were first brought from America to West Africa by the Portuguese to serve, it is believed, as food for slaves on the return voyage. And to-day the crop is not merely one of the principal food crops of the people, but in some areas is the principal export crop as well, and so the principal means by which the people are able to purchase European commodities. Cocoa also was imported by the Portuguese into the West African island of San Thomé, and from there (and from Fernando Po) was introduced into the Gold Coast, where its successful cultivation in recent times has brought great wealth to the people.¹ It has also involved them in the ups and downs of world prices, the under-production of food crops, the destruction of immense areas of forest land, and a far-reaching modification of the existing system of land tenure. From the Portuguese, again, the peoples of West Africa obtained cassava and sweet potatoes, two crops which grow throughout or late into the dry season, and on this account must have saved thousands of lives in years of famine. Maize

¹ In 1892 the Gold Coast was exporting 5 tons of cocoa annually. In 1932 the export figures were 256,000.

again was introduced from the New World,¹ and so was tobacco, which has profoundly influenced the culture and customs of almost every West African tribe. These facts are worthy of notice, not to emphasize any debt of West Africa to Europe, since the introduction of these new crops was largely accidental, and certainly not philanthropic, but rather to illustrate the adaptability of the Negro, who has shown that he can, sometimes within the space of a few years, adopt new crops, entailing new methods of cultivation, new systems of rotation, new types of food, new ways of cooking, and a whole host of new social and religious habits. The African is not resistant to change, but is quick to adopt new ideas once he has proved their suitability to himself.

English mariners were busy on the West Coast as early as 1553 and were followed by Spaniards, Dutch, French, Danish, and others. In the seventeenth century the supremacy of Portugal in West Africa passed to Holland, and in the eighteenth and nineteenth to France and Great Britain. But the object of all was to obtain trade rather than territory, and little interest was shown in the interior. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, however, with the realization of the horrors of the trade in human beings, keen interest regarding the hinterland regions of Africa was aroused, and European Governments began to consider the possibility of acquiring political rights. In view of the present-day attitude towards international co-operation in dealing with some of Africa's problems it is of particular interest to recall that in 1876 the Brussels Conference resulted in the formation of an International Association with national committees, representing the various European Powers. The object of the Association was to place the exploration and development of Africa on an international basis. But this ideal proved to be impracticable, since the national committees soon began to work entirely in the interests of their own countries.² And so began the 'scramble for

¹ But it may also have been introduced into some regions of the Nilotic Sudan from Asia. The Hausa word for maize, *masara*, suggests an Asiatic origin via Egypt (Maasr).

² See J. S. Keltie, *The Partition of Africa*, 2nd edition, pp. 118 ff.

Africa', through the agency very often of a few individuals of ability and foresight. Togoland and the Cameroons were placed under German protection, largely as a result of the initiative of Dr. Nachtigal, and about this time also Great Britain, realizing reluctantly¹ that political action was necessary for the consolidation of her commercial interests, instructed Consul Hewett to secure the Oil Rivers district and the Niger Delta.² On the Lower Niger, thanks to the efforts of Goldie, the Cecil Rhodes of West Africa, a charter was in 1886 obtained for a company that was not merely to develop trade but to exercise many of the administrative functions of government, and if possible to enter into political relations with the powerful sultanate of Sokoto.³ Meanwhile France was busy, and extended her sovereignty over most of the areas of West Africa which had not been claimed by Great Britain or Germany. The Berlin Conference of 1885 recognized the 'spheres of influence', as they were called, of the various European Governments. We need not follow farther the course of political developments, beyond remarking that all the British spheres of influence became protectorates, a term which has never received statutory definition. In strict law the territory of a British protectorate does not form part of the British dominions, nor are its subjects British subjects. In theory

¹ In 1865 a Select Committee of the House of Commons recommended 'That all further extension of territory or assumption of government, or new treaties offering any protection to native tribes, would be inexpedient; and that the object of our policy should be to encourage the natives in the exercise of those qualities which may render it possible for us more and more to transfer to them the administration of all the governments with a view to our ultimate withdrawal from all, except, probably, Sierra Leone.' *Report of the Select Committee on Africa (Western Coast)*, 412 (1865).

² 'This policy of 1865 has remained the policy of the English Government towards West Africa up to 1894.' Mary H. Kingsley, *West African Studies*, p. 260.

³ 'The rulers of Great Britain were strongly opposed to the extension of our territory in Africa, but the popular demand left the Foreign Office no alternative.' Lord Lugard, *The Dual Mandate*.

⁴ H. H. Johnston, *The Colonization of Africa*, p. 184.

⁵ A representative of the company, Joseph Thomson, had in the previous year visited Sokoto and Gando and obtained from the Sultans treaties in favour of the British. For a summary of the principal clauses of the charter see Sir Alan Burns, *History of Nigeria*, p. 164.

the Crown holds a protectorate as an overlord, and also as a trust for the benefit of the protected peoples.¹ In practice the British Government makes dispositions regarding protectorates which amount to annexation; but it can be justly claimed, also, that it has endeavoured to fulfil the highest ideals of trusteeship.

In my second lecture I shall deal with some of the present-day problems of cultural change.

¹ See M. Nathan, *Empire Government*, p. 139.

II

ADMINISTRATION AND CULTURAL CHANGE

THE present chapter deals with problems of administration and cultural change. And at the outset it is necessary to insist once again on the extraordinary complexity of the cultural situation. There is no homogeneity, and so there are no rule-of-thumb methods which can be applied to every case. Almost every tribe has developed a culture of its own, determined by its own history and its physical and economic requirements. And even in a single tribe there may be a whole gamut of cultural variations.

Perhaps the best way to bring this home will be to give one or two examples of tribes at various stages of Europeanization, beginning with those that are least affected and working up to those so far westernized that most of the younger generation have received some form of elementary education.

The least affected are, perhaps, the nomad, cattle-owning Fulani, who, in Nigeria, number about three hundred thousand. They move with their herds over large areas of country, following the seasonal variations in the pasturage. They live in beehive-shaped huts, consisting of frames of sticks covered over with a rough thatch of dried grass. At night their cattle are tethered together in pairs within a stockade of thorns, and during the day are taken to pasture and trained to scatter at a signal from the herdsman. The Fulani regard their cattle with an almost religious veneration. By them they acquire wives and social prestige, as well as a general sense of security. Their attitude towards their cattle is, therefore, not primarily commercial, and they avoid slaughtering them except at festivals, or to find the money to pay their tax. The nomad Fulani are no lovers of Europeans. They resent the cattle tax and the restrictions placed upon the movement of cattle, for example during outbreaks of rinderpest. Nevertheless, they are beginning to believe in the value of inoculations. The

Administration would like the Fulani to adopt a more economic attitude towards their cattle, and the work of the Veterinary Department is necessarily directed towards this end. But it is well understood by Government officials that the Fulani have other standards of value than those of Europeans, and the more this attitude is appreciated the easier will it be to allay feelings of distrust. Culturally, the nomad Fulani are not likely to alter much in the immediate future, unless they abandon their nomadic habits. Their children will remain uneducated, in the ordinary sense of this term, and they will continue to lead a life of aloofness from the world of progress.

Our next example will be the tribe known as the Lala, one of the many pagan peoples living in the remote regions of north-eastern Nigeria.¹ I visited the Lala about ten years ago, and was, I believe, the first Government official to do so without an armed guard. They live in houses built of grass matting, they have priest-chiefs who are associated with the corn, they identify the Supreme Being with the Sun, they are strongly addicted to magic and transfer diseases magically to pottery images; in their language they make use of an inclusive and exclusive first personal plural pronoun;² and they call their fathers *papa* and their mothers *ma*! These people have practically no form of wealth, and live entirely on the crops they grow. Their tax was, I think, about a shilling a year per adult male, and they were quite glad during my stay to sell a sheep for ninepence and a chicken for a penny. They are still almost untouched by European influence and are likely to remain so for many years to come. No doubt before long a Christian mission will be established among the Lala, and they will receive some form of elementary education. But, being far away from all lines of communication, their standard of living is unlikely to rise to a higher level than it is to-day.

¹ For an account of the Lala tribe see C. K. Meek, *Tribal Studies in Northern Nigeria*, vol. ii, pp. 434-80 (*passim*).

² This curious grammatical feature by which the person addressed is included or excluded, according to the form of pronoun used, is found among the Fulani and a number of tribes in north-eastern Nigeria. See, e.g., C. K. Meek, *Tribal Studies in Northern Nigeria*, vol. i, p. 177 note.

There are many tribes in West Africa who are at the same cultural stage as the Lala.

Turning northwards to Kano we find ourselves in a very different world. Kano is the most famous of the old walled cities of the Western Sudan, and is the centre of a Muslim Emirate or native state as big as Belgium, with a population of more than two million people. It is hard to believe that only thirty-five years have elapsed since Lord Lugard marched into Kano, and put a stop to the tyranny of the Fulani, whose Sultan at Sokoto had written, saying, 'Between you and me there are no dealings except as between Mussulmans and unbelievers.' Kano had been a centre of the slave trade, and when Canon Robinson visited the city in 1894 he reckoned that five hundred slaves were being sold daily in the markets.¹ To-day Kano is one of the most prosperous cities in West Africa. In pre-British times its markets were crowded with goods of European manufacture, but those goods had been transported across the Sahara from Mediterranean ports. Now they are brought up the railway line from Lagos, and Kano no longer faces to the north but to the south. And it has become the centre of the great new ground-nut industry. In 1903 the value of ground-nuts exported from Nigeria was assessed at £2,700. In 1929 the value was £2,500,000—a sum nearly one thousand times as great, and three times greater than the total annual amount derived from the whole of Nigeria in direct taxation.² And yet, as Miss Perham has remarked, 'the people of Kano are still in the position of being more interested in the local rainfall than in the European trade cycles'. For 'the bottom may fall out of the ground-nut market, but with good harvests the people are still prosperous with a large internal trade'.³ Kano Emirate is to-day governed by a nephew of the very Emir who was deposed after the capture of the city in 1903. He is assisted by an executive council, and with certain experts on Muslim law constitutes a judicial council

¹ C. H. Robinson, *Hausaland* (1900).

² See *The Nigeria Handbook*, 1936, p. 279.

³ Margery Perham, *Native Administration in Nigeria*, p. 85.

with the widest possible powers. The Emir has also considerable legislative authority, since he can, with the approval of the Governor, make any regulations that appear necessary. Thus rules have been made prohibiting the importation of liquor, the driving of lorries above certain speeds, the improper flaying of hides, and so on. And in this way Muslim law is being assisted to meet new conditions. Kano under Indirect Rule has certainly not lagged behind the times. Yet there are many problems to be solved. There is, for example, the prime necessity of raising the standard of official morality. Judicial corruption, embezzlement of public money, and over-collection of taxes are still of too frequent occurrence. These can only be eliminated by patience and education, and in some cases by the payment of higher salaries. For, as Lord Hailey has remarked, 'High character is not encouraged by low pay'. Then there are problems of land tenure, to which I shall refer later, and legal problems, such as the trial by Muslim judges of cases between Muslims and pagans, or Muslims and Christians. In this respect there has been a considerable degree of accommodation, and the general attitude is that, in mixed cases, Muslim law can and should be modified to meet the requirements of non-Muslim litigants.

One more example will be sufficient to illustrate the variations in the degrees of Europeanization. The Ibo of the Southern Provinces of Nigeria number close on four million people. They are a collection of peoples speaking dialects of the same language, and sharing more or less a common culture, but they have never had any political unity, and indeed their highest form of political organization was no bigger than a clan or a number of contiguous villages. The clan was controlled by a council of the heads of families or kindreds composing the village. There were no chiefs, but in many clans a single individual of ability might attain to a position of considerable authority. If such a person were also possessed of wealth, he could be more autocratic than chiefs in other tribes were allowed to be. Wealth was also the passport to membership of

another institution, the society known as *Qzq*. The members of this society constituted a bureaucracy in each clan, their persons were sacred, and they had numerous privileges and responsibilities. The society acted not merely as a social and administrative cement for the clan, but was a bond of union between one clan and another.

It is only some thirty-five years since the British Government was able to establish civil authority over the whole of Iboland. In 1913 Port Harcourt was founded, and became the terminus of a railway which passed through the heart of Iboland, and has been a main factor in opening the country to outside influence. Iboland has also been covered by a network of roads, and an immense amount of trade is now carried on by motor vehicles, many of which are owned by members of the Ibo tribe. In 1906 there was one Government school at Onitsha and one at Owerri. In 1931, that is, twenty-five years later, there were in the Ibo provinces of Owerri and Onitsha eleven Government schools, seventy-four schools assisted by the Government, and 1,092 non-assisted schools. In these two provinces also there were, in 1931, 300,000 adherents of Christian churches. It is evident, therefore, that the Ibo are strong in their demand for Western education and religion. There is hardly a village without its church and school.

Now it is obvious that the kind of problem that the Government of Nigeria had to face in Iboland was very different from that in an ancient emirate like Kano. In Kano the Government found a highly civilized people of Muhammadan culture with a centralized system of government that could be utilized almost as it stood. In Iboland, however, there was the initial difficulty of providing a system of native administration for two thousand village groups each of which recognized no higher authority than itself. Artificial districts, artificial chiefs and artificial courts were created, but this solution proved to be an over-simplification of what was, and still remains, an extremely complicated problem. Riots in 1929, precipitated by economic causes, showed that the overriding of the indigenous system of local administration, which had never been understood or

studied, had been a disastrous mistake. The village and clan councils were accordingly restored, and though this policy appeared to some to be reactionary, it was soon shown that the councils could and should be used to represent progressive as well as conservative opinion. But the problem remains of creating an administrative machine which will give expression to the new outlook which is no longer confined to the single village group or clan. Schemes of federation between clans are accordingly being encouraged, and in this way it is hoped to broaden the basis of administration, and create a wider sense of solidarity.

As regards the *Ozọ*, and other societies of ranks and titles, these have in many regions fallen into a state of decadence, largely owing to the opposition of Christian missions, which forbade their members to join the society, on the ground that certain features of the initiation ritual were idolatrous. New economic standards of value also led to a falling off of membership, as those who had saved money found that they could invest it in ways which gave a better return, and also more prestige, than membership of the *Ozọ* Society.

In many areas, however, the *Ozọ*, or other title-conferring societies, are still flourishing institutions and are closely linked with the administrative system. All prominent men in public affairs are members of the society, and it would be difficult for any non-member to attain to any position of eminence. Thus, while the society can in some localities be safely left to die a natural death, in others it must be treated with respect, so long as it is respected by the people and continues to fulfil a useful function in local administration.¹ This illustrates the fact that, even as regards a single institution, there may be wide variations in the attitude of the people and that schemes of general applicability may be unsuitable.

I should now like to make a few observations regarding

¹ This information on the Ibo tribe and the *Ozọ* society is, by kind permission of the Oxford University Press, taken from my *Law and Authority in a Nigerian Tribe* (1937).

some other social and economic conditions common to all West Africa. The basis of the social organization is normally the extended family or kindred, and, though the relatives on both the father's and mother's side have a strong interest in the welfare of the children, one line of descent is usually predominant, and kinship is reckoned either in the father's or the mother's line. In other words, the social group or tribe is either patrilineal or matrilineal. But one effect of the clash of cultures in West Africa is that great confusion has been introduced, and to-day we may see tribes in which one section has switched over to the patrilineal principle, while another has clung to the old matrilineal principle; or a whole tribe may be in a transitional stage; or a matrilineal tribe may have begun to intermarry with a patrilineal. In all such cases the traditional systems of inheritance and succession have been thrown into a chaotic condition. Yet accommodation is being made in a variety of ways; and chief among these is the large measure of freedom now given to children of mixed marriages, in choosing, when they are old enough to choose, whether they will reside in the group of the father or in that of the mother. It has also become a principle of inheritance that no one shall inherit from a relative to whom he has rendered no form of service; that is to say that a son who had been living with his maternal uncle should not be allowed to inherit from his father.

The general tendency is for matrilineal tribes to become patrilineal; and I know of no instance of the reverse process. One factor that has operated in favour of patriliney has been the spread of Muhammadanism, which enjoins patriliney. And in Nigeria, and possibly other British dependencies, the British Administration has directly or indirectly encouraged patriliney and patripotestal authority. In the early days of British administration in Northern Nigeria matrilineal principles were little understood, and when claims were made in British courts for the custody of a sister's child they were received with suspicion and frequently disallowed. Indeed, in many districts it was made clear that the Administration would not recognize the

authority of any relative except the child's own father. There was some justification for this attitude. At that time—I am speaking of the years between 1900 and 1910—one of the main concerns of the Administration was the suppression of slavery. And it had long been a common practice among matrilineal peoples for men who were in need of money to sell into slavery the children of their sisters.

An institution which has fallen under the definite ban of British Administration in Nigeria is marriage by exchange—that is to say the system by which two men agree to exchange their sisters or other female relatives. There are certain obvious objections to this system of marriage. The woman is liable to become a mere chattel in the hands of her brother, and to be forced to marry a man for whom she may have no affection. She might even be given to some old man in exchange for his daughter or niece. Or she might be given to her brother's creditor in order to cancel a debt. If she were ill-treated by her husband she had little remedy, as the disruption of her marriage would entail that also of her brother. The status of the wife in fact under the exchange system was little better than that of a slave. There were other disadvantages, and altogether British District Officers found themselves so harassed with the endless litigation and complications arising from marriage by exchange that in one province after another the institution came to be prohibited.

But the prohibition of marriage by exchange had far-reaching consequences which, in the absence of a close understanding of the social organization, had not been anticipated. It was not, for instance, realized that in some tribes the exchange group, that is to say, the group in which all the males were entitled to use the females for exchange purposes, was a basic element in the social organization, and that in doing away with it you were doing away with one of the principal integrating forces of society. In other tribes, again, you were upsetting the balance between patripotestal and matripotestal authority, since children born under the exchange form of marriage belonged to the father's group,

while children born under the alternative purchase form belonged to the mother's group.¹ The abolition of marriage by exchange interfered, also, with rules such as that no person could become a chief, or perform certain religious rites, unless he were the son of an exchange wife; and it upset the system of exogamy, or the rule that you must marry outside your own group, a rule which has been called primitive man's method of race preservation.

There can, I think, be no doubt that, ultimately, the exchange system of marriage was bound to disappear, for the simple reason that women would no longer consent to be mere pawns in the hands of their brothers. Moreover, association and intermarriage with Muslim peoples had led some of the more progressive sections of the community to regard this peculiarly pagan form of marriage as a sign of cultural inferiority. Yet many of the abuses of marriage by exchange could have been eliminated by introducing rules forbidding the exchanging of a sister to cancel a debt, or exchanging a wife without her consent, and so on. The sudden abolition of the entire institution, without adequate consideration of the possible consequences, has caused profound disturbance, and has created a serious rift between the younger generation and the old. But as it is, there is nothing now to be done, and we can leave the young ladies singing their new song of freedom—"The dance is merriest when the dancers are of the same age. Let the old men run after the old women, and leave us to find husbands amongst the companions of our youth."²

Turning now to some matters of economics, it may be

¹ But, as already stated, equilibrium between the matrilineal and patrilineal principles is being maintained by allowing children the option of remaining in their father's group or joining that of their maternal uncle. At the same time a new tendency has arisen to distinguish between a marriage contracted with a large and one with a small bride-price, the former giving the father's group control over the children and the latter leaving the control in the mother's group.

² See *Akiga's Story*, p. 167. In this excellent account of changing conditions among the Tiv tribe, Akiga and Dr. East discuss the effect of the abolition of exchange marriage among the Tiv. For further data see C. K. Meek, *Tribal Studies in Northern Nigeria*, vol. i, pp. 537 ff.; *A Sudanese Kingdom*, pp. 373-6, and an article in *Africa* (vol. ix, no. 1, pp. 64-74) entitled 'Marriage by Exchange—A Disappearing Institution'.

observed that the kindred or large family, the basic social unit, is usually an independent economic unit. It owns its own land, and from its own farms provides the major part of its own food-supplies. Even the traders or artisans are generally farmers as well. The kindred is not, therefore, primarily dependent on external trade. It can live a comfortable life, judged by the old standards, on its own resources. The kindred also, being a wide group of relatives closely knit together for purposes of mutual help, performs many of the functions which in European countries are thrown on government organizations.¹

This state of affairs is nowadays being threatened in various ways. In many localities the sole or principal crops now being grown are export crops, with the result that a slump in world prices not merely forces the people to give up new luxuries which have almost become necessities, but may also cause unemployment, starvation, and even political unrest. At the same time the solidarity of the kinship grouping is for various reasons, largely economic,² giving way to a more individual system, and there is less disposition towards mutual help. Then again there are signs that in some localities the population is increasing beyond the limits of the productivity of the land, thereby giving rise to a non-agricultural population with nothing to exchange for the food it requires. This is particularly noticeable in certain parts of Iboland, and must soon become one of the major problems. Yet a dense population need not be an evil, provided that the people are able to develop new industries. It is largely owing to land-hunger that members of the Isu tribe have become distinguished as the middlemen of European trade in south-eastern Nigeria.

There are other aspects of overcrowding which must become increasingly important as the population increases. There is the steady deterioration of existing farm lands through inadequate periods of rest; and there is the progres-

¹ It is generally true to say that in West Africa the kinship organization is strongest where the state organization is weakest.

² e.g. European money economy and the competitive spirit. It is no longer extraordinary to see people working on the farms of others for wages.

sive destruction of the remaining forest lands. The Pax Britannica, which has enabled pagan tribes to leave their hills and farm in safety at great distances from the parent village, together with an increased production of native crops for export, have all tended to the destruction of vegetation and deterioration of the soil. The various administrations have long been alive to the danger of deforestation, and in Nigeria the native authorities are associated with the Government in the protection of forest lands. To the people the idea of protecting certain forest areas is not strange, as in most communities restrictions were in the olden days imposed on the felling of trees in sacred groves, or to prevent villages being robbed of shade, or protection in war. But for extensive schemes of conservation, such as are necessary to-day, the whole-hearted co-operation of the people is required, and this must be considered one of the foremost problems of adjustment.

Then, again, there is the immensely important question of the effect of new conditions on the traditional systems of land tenure. On the Gold Coast, for example, owing to the development of the cocoa industry, enormous tracts of land formerly held in common have been converted into individual holdings. Not that we are to assume, as is commonly assumed, that the indigenous system of land tenure is a communal system, in the sense that there are no forms of private rights. Every individual farmer has a right to a sector of farming land, and he cannot be disturbed from land which he uses regularly.¹ But freehold rights in our sense do not exist, since the conditions that would produce them have not yet arisen, to any great extent. Land can have no transfer value where there is plenty of it for everybody. But in crowded areas the case is different, and with an increasing population we must expect to see a widespread extension of claims to permanent rights in land.² This process will be accelerated in areas in which

¹ Or at the intervals made necessary by the shifting system of cultivation.

² Just as in England pressure of population and the desire to get a cash return brought about a change from the communal (strip) to the enclosure system in Tudor times.

crops are extensively grown for export, since the systematic cultivation of export crops requires a fair degree of security of tenure. There are, therefore, very urgent problems of adjustment regarding land tenure which have hardly been tackled at all by the various administrations.¹ These will require the closest investigation, if increased security of tenure is not to result in a haphazard system of individual proprietorship, entailing the breaking up of family lands and all the evils of unrestricted rights of sale. But any new remedies proposed must be based on a thorough knowledge of existing systems. This applies, indeed, to any new economic schemes, such as co-operative societies or new agricultural methods. In Southern Nigeria, for example, an attempt was made to induce farmers to adopt American cotton, which had been found to be superior to the native seed cotton. But this proved a failure, since native cotton could be grown on the same land as other crops, whereas American cotton required land specially cleared for itself. Later on, however, the same farmers readily adopted a better quality of native cotton which could be interplanted with their other crops.² In agriculture, as in administration, the improvement of old methods may be of more value than the introduction of new.

There are immense problems connected with health. The opening up of communications has facilitated the spread of epidemic diseases such as relapsing fever, cerebro-spinal meningitis, and yellow fever. And many tribes, hitherto free, have been infected with venereal disease. Then there are many native beliefs and practices that lead directly to the destruction of life. The very belief in numerous tribes that all diseases are due to the action of witchcraft or evil spirits is itself a hindrance to the formation of hygienic habits. The belief that the abnormal is dangerous leads many peoples to kill twins or children who cut the upper before the lower teeth.³ But the most serious

¹ See, e.g., C. K. Meek, *Law and Authority in a Nigerian Tribe*, p. 344; also pp. 100-4.

² For these facts I am indebted to Messrs. Faulkner & Mackie's standard work on *West African Agriculture*, p. 11.

³ See C. K. Meek, *Law and Authority in a Nigerian Tribe*, pp. 290-1.

of all health problems is malnutrition. There are hundreds of tribes living, for part of the year at least, in a state of semi-starvation. And this condition not merely produces specific diseases such as pellagra and tropical ulcer, but lowers the resistance to all forms of disease and entails also a feeble state of body and of mind. Malnutrition may be associated with shortage of land, or with general poverty. The main remedy therefore must be the gradual raising of the standard of living. But instruction in a more judicious balancing of diets, showing for example that excessive dependence on cassava or maize is likely to produce pellagra, would also be of service. And the people must learn to conserve their supplies instead of living sumptuously for the first six months of the year and starving themselves for the remainder.

It is hardly necessary to refer here to the magnificent work being done by the medical and sanitary services. The chief difficulty lies, in countries so vast, in extending these services so as to bring them within the reach of all. In Nigeria an effort is being made to broaden the basis of medical assistance by a widely spread scheme of Native Administration dispensaries, and some two hundred and fifty of these have been established in the last seven or eight years.

All schemes directed towards an improved hygiene must, of course, be applied in such a way that they win the co-operation of the people. Vaccination, for example, may be opposed not because the principle is new, since the people themselves may long have practised inoculation, but because it is carried out in a public manner which they would regard as fraught with magical danger. Again, in Muhammadan towns, opposition has been offered to the inspection of houses made with a view to getting rid of the mosquitoes which carry yellow fever, but the opposition has been withdrawn when female inspectors were substituted for male. It should be remembered, also, that psychological and emotional factors form part of the general problem of health, and this side of preventive medicine will no doubt in time receive more attention than can be

given to it to-day. The witchcraft complex, for example, which has a devastating effect on the psychic life of the people, can best be eradicated, not by laws directed against the effects of the belief, but by instruction in the causation of disease and by general improvement in hygiene.¹

There are many other topics to which I should like to have made some reference, but for reasons of space I must confine my closing remarks to a few general observations. In countries which are changing so rapidly we must expect occasional reactionary movements. In the past these have usually been associated with some form of religious enthusiasm. Thus, in Northern Nigeria, there have been sporadic outbursts of Mahdism. And in 1925 a movement arose at Atta in Southern Nigeria in answer to what was believed to be a message from God. Bands of women marched up and down the country, demanding a return to the customs of olden times as the surest means of increasing the birth-rate. No one, they said, must use British money currency, wives should have free relations with other men than their husbands, and disputes should be settled by village councils and not by the native courts established by the British.² Again, in 1927, there was a remarkable outbreak, which, though outwardly associated with Christianity, displayed many of the symptoms of pagan possession. Members of a certain Christian mission, declaring themselves to be inspired, went about destroying images sacred to the pagans and torturing those who refused to confess their sins. Many of the missionaries fell into a frenzied state, rolled their eyes, contorted their limbs, and foamed at the mouth.³

Then I should like to make a few observations about chieftainship. A tone time chieftainship was regarded as a stereotyped autocratic institution. But now it is realized that there are infinite varieties of chieftainship, ranging from mere ceremonial heads to autocrats who hold all the strings of administration. There are also many chiefs

¹ See, e.g., *Law and Authority*, op. cit., pp. 344-6.

² See Sessional Paper No. 28 of 1930, par. 60 ff.

³ *Ibid.*, Annexure I, par. 56.

who are still regarded by their people as the embodiment of deity, and so are hedged round by innumerable taboos. Chieftainship of this kind is obviously a handicap to progressive administration. In many cases it has died out, for the simple reason that no one was willing to accept a position which entailed a total loss of personal liberty,¹ and might even entail a violent death, since it was a common custom to strangle divine chiefs who were so human as to fall sick, or even to fall off a horse. In other cases the chiefs themselves have gradually got rid of the taboos, offering sacrifice on the first occasion of breaking them. In course of time the sacrifice also is dropped. But the validity of divine chieftainship depends ultimately on the continued faith of the people, and once that is shaken the character of the chieftainship becomes transformed.

There are some who hold that under the new conditions chiefs are often no more than puppets of the suzerain power. In olden days the chief was, as Professor Malinowski has put it, a kind of tribal banker, but nowadays the Government carries out many of the duties formerly performed by the chief, just as the Church, in communities which have become Christian, has relieved the chief of many of his priestly functions. Yet the chief continues to be the centre of authority and symbol of unity. And that he need not be a mere agent of the Government was shown recently on the Gold Coast, when the hold-up of cocoa was supported by the local chiefs with a vigour that at times almost verged on illegality.² In the new communities composed of heterogeneous elements, chiefs display an astonishing degree of liberalism. I once asked the chief of a large tribe in Northern Nigeria how his conversion to Christianity would affect his relations with his pagan subjects, on whose behalf he had been accustomed to offer certain annual sacrifices. He replied that a chief was the father of his people, and that, just as a father did not distinguish between his children, so

¹ See, e.g., Goldie, *Calabar and its Mission*, p. 42 f.

² On the other hand, there is little evidence, particularly in those areas in which the principles of Indirect Rule have been fully applied, for the view that the chief must oppose the Government or lose the support of his people.

he would continue to offer sacrifice on behalf of his pagan people, and continue also to take the leading part in the Muhammadan rites at the close of the annual fast.

There is one further observation regarding chieftainship. In many tribes, though chieftainship may not have been institutionalized, an individual may have exercised all the authority of a chief, by virtue of his own personality and wealth. It is important, therefore, that while chiefs should never be forced on peoples who are not accustomed to them, opportunity should be given for leadership, which may, in fact, be tantamount to chieftainship. On the other hand, the essential part played by councils as checks on the powers of chiefs, and in villages as instruments of local administration and an outlet for the expression of public opinion, is only now being fully recognized. The technique of the working of these councils requires careful study.

Among other administrative problems is the disruption of villages owing to the new safety by which people can live the whole year round on their farms. Thus the solidarity of village life is being impaired, and it is becoming increasingly difficult for the native authorities to enforce their orders, or even to keep track of those who should be helping the village to pay its tax. In many cases it has become necessary to issue orders that the people must reassemble in the parent village once every year. But this cannot prevent the natural process of fragmentation and re-formation which goes on in every society. New, loosely knit rural communities, with new authorities, are bound to emerge. But, on the other hand, increased specialism is likely to lead to an increase in the number and size of cities. 'The development of cities', it has been said, 'holds the secret of social progress.'¹

To sum up the lesson of this sketch of cultural conditions in British West Africa to-day, it would seem that there is an obvious need for continuous sociological study, so that the administrations may be kept fully informed of important facts relating to cultural change. Moreover, as there are infinite varieties of culture, and infinite degrees of reaction

¹ Dr. De Kat Angelino, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

to European influence, so the guiding principle of administrative policy should be its comprehensiveness and elasticity. New adjustments should, as far as possible, grow out of the old vital institutions, but the work of adjustment will, in many cases, be made easier by a generous association with administration of young progressive Africans. A flexible policy is the one most consistent with the free systems of the English-speaking peoples.

PART II

By W. M. MACMILLAN, M.A.

III

AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT

(a) *By External Capital*

Mining Enterprise and the Labour Problem

WHEN last year I was honoured by the invitation of the Heath Clark Trustees to lecture on their foundation, I immediately decided that, instead of conferring with books and documents, I must take the opportunity to go out again into the field—to revise earlier impressions of West Africa and gather new ones. This recent experience has shaped my course for me. Whereas Dr. Meek has made a masterly general survey, I ask your indulgence if I use the discretion allowed by the qualifying ‘some’ of the title to embark on a rather detailed study of certain particulars. It is not to be taken as a slight on any finished achievement if I concentrate attention on work yet to be done to reach a more harmonious adjustment to that process of change which has fairly begun in Africa—change which is also, as some one has said, the essence of history.

First I propose to examine in the light of experience in Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast the process and some of the consequences of mining, which is commonly supposed to be ‘the most disturbing innovation of European enterprise. But since there still are those who think loosely—on the one hand of the ‘wealth’ of Africa, on the other of the ‘exploitation’ of that wealth and of the African people—it is necessary to insist that the starting-point in the discussion of African problems must always be the poverty and scantiness of African natural resources. The material and spiritual backwardness of the people is very much a consequence. ‘The fate of ‘poor whites’ in South Africa is evidence of the difficulty of making a living from African soil, suggesting that the difficulties of ‘adjustment’ are due, not to something inherent in the African character, but rather to the natural conditions which all who live in Africa have to contend with. Had any large part of

Africa been really fertile the continent could not have figured so long in history as 'Dark'. A small section of the west, which here concerns us, has proved suitable for one profitable crop, cocoa: but in general the soil is ordinary and a good deal is known to be positively deficient in vital salts. Some parts even here, as in so much of the continent, have an uncertain rainfall and only a short growing-season. But the characteristic West Coast agricultural problem arises rather from excessive rain. Till the bush has been cleared nothing can be planted, but once the protective cover is removed the soil is ruinously exposed to scorching sun and torrential rains. In the better parts of Europe agricultural science has made it possible to ensure that tillage should be a conservative factor, the soil positively deteriorating unless fully used. In West Africa the best efforts of scientists have failed as yet to solve the problem of soil conservation, part of the difficulty being that there is very little of that country in which cattle can live, so that the obvious natural supply of manure is lacking. For all that Governments can do, therefore, 'shifting' cultivation and the social complications that belong to it are almost unavoidable.

The scarcity or total absence of cattle is serious also in its effects on the food-supply, since there is no milk even for children, and a shortage of meat for all. The forest brings one saving gift, the oil palm, whose fruit supplies valuable nourishment to the relatively dense population of the unhealthy palm belt. But actual research is now beginning to demonstrate that native African diet is as a rule poor in quality, lacking in variety, and at certain regular seasons of the year deficient even in quantity. As a consequence Africans in general have a low power of resistance to the disease carried by parasites that flourish in that climate. An audience at the School of Tropical Medicine will be in no danger of underestimating the importance of health as a factor contributing heavily to, or even determining, that general 'backwardness' which must make Africa a 'problem' till remedies have been found and applied.

One other general consideration which must not be overlooked, more especially for its bearing on the problem of labour, is that as a whole Africa is under-populated. The Ibo country, of which Dr. Meek has spoken, is a remarkable exception. The people are commonly too few for the immense task of taming this continent, of clearing the bush, keeping it clear, and making it yield. Material progress, already retarded by the poor mental equipment of the people, is thus further checked, and at the same time the inadequacy of African material resources makes the provision of health and education services supremely difficult. Escape from this dilemma depends on making better use at one and the same time both of the human and of the material resources as they now are.

Perhaps because, for a variety of reasons, mining enterprise tends to be socially suspect, the importance of mining and its effects in West Africa are often forgotten or ignored. Many suppose that where there is no white population there can be none of the complexities that arise in east and south. Certainly also the possible usefulness of the mining industry is imperfectly realized by those who identify mining with Rand slums. But it is necessary to learn from the dearly bought experience of South and Central Africa, and to improve upon it, if in the relatively new West African field, where practice and policy are still open to intelligent planning, the communities are to benefit as they ought from the development of their mineral resources. It is clear that the wealth brought by mining enterprise has been made to contribute to South African development in a way that West African Governments have not yet learnt to emulate. The one lesson learnt by some officials, and by many of those unofficially interested in African welfare, is the negative one—that West Africa must at all costs avoid reproducing on its mines the mistakes made on the Rand.

It is true that the herding together in compounds of more than 300,000 males (there is only a mockery of 'married quarters') is not an example to be followed. On the other

hand, even the compounds afford lessons of a positive and instructive kind, and South African mines cannot be held to blame for the landlessness and congestion of population which have desolated South African 'Reserves'—they have if anything helped to counteract the effects. In spite of appearances conditions in South Africa are in some respects decidedly better than in the West. The number of Africans employed on the Rand, latterly well over 300,000, is enormously greater than the combined total of those on West Coast mines, and necessarily almost the whole of this great army is drawn from distant homes. The alternative would be a vast transplantation which might not be desirable, even if political influences tolerated alienation of land sufficient to provide for the families in a European-owned part of the country. But though there is no such insuperable difficulty either of numbers or of distance, authorities in the west, unlike those of the Copper Belt, have so far made no greater effort to provide mine-workers with settled family homes on the site of their work. Moreover, both in South Africa and on the Copper Belt the labour and the cost of attracting recruits has gradually taught the mine managements to treat their men with a care and consideration almost unheard of on the Coast, till lately, when some of the great southern 'Groups' have begun to take an interest in West Coast mining. The Compound system, though in itself undesirable, facilitated experiments in health control and diet, and the results proved so beneficial and profitable that the better mines have come to set a new standard. They can now fairly claim to be ahead even of Governments in the attack on these root causes of African debility.

My first impression, on a former visit six years ago, was that just because labour was much more easily obtainable, at least in the comparatively small numbers then required, West African employers were far less considerate and 'conservative' of their labour. At that time some employers actually defended their policy, which amounted really to neglect, on the ground that they designedly left their labourers to enjoy 'freedom' in villages of their own, or

under conditions 'as like their own as possible'. Actually conditions were inevitably worse than 'their own', villages near mines being invaded by crowds of labourers, would-be labourers, and their hangers-on. In any case this policy implied that employers were content to leave their labourers just as inefficient as they found them. My latest visit suggested that there has been some sensible change. Mining having greatly expanded, managements were less certain that labour-supplies would be adequate for all their needs, and more disposed to think and plan ahead.

It must be conceded that conditions have not hitherto been conducive to patience and forethought in those who have made mining or any other ventures in West Africa. The chance encounter on my first approach to a certain well-equipped modern mine with the most formidable snake I ever met, a huge mamba, and then with a prowling leopard, gave me, I confess, a new access of sympathy and respect for the persistence and power of endurance of those who made these mineral discoveries in the almost literally impenetrable African bush—more particularly as this was immediately followed by at least a cursory view of the acute discomforts of the prospecting still in progress. Highly mineralized country is not as a rule the best for agriculture. New mines are likely to be out of the way of the centres of population, and local man-power is seldom sufficient to supply labour for mining development and at the same time to increase its production of food crops. In West Africa the population is generally greater than in South or Central Africa, but any advantage on this score has been fully counterbalanced by the exceptional disabilities of climate and transport. It is now accepted that the best safeguards of health in this climate are care and good food. But prospectors even yet, and till the other day all pioneers, were completely dependent on their feet to get them to their objective, and on African heads for the transport of all their needs, including mining machinery. Only modern transport has made large-scale development possible, and even yet, since tours must be short, work is interrupted and personnel constantly changing, while control is very

largely in the hands of absentee directors. Mining camps tend thus to be isolated and self-contained in the midst of mountainous forest country which is reached sometimes only by a railway of the mine's own building. West Coast managers are to be excused if some of them find their energies used up in the day-to-day labour of getting their mines into working trim. But it follows that a special responsibility rests on the Governments to keep an eye on the social effects of the mines' demand for labour. The country is so unexplored and inaccessible that Governments and mining directors alike will be ill advised to base their labour policy on the assumption (not unknown in very high quarters) that further major discoveries of mineral wealth are unlikely.

The position in Sierra Leone to-day may be summarized in the statement that at any given moment fully 10,000 labourers are now in mining employment where only twelve years ago there were no more than a few casual diggers. It must be remembered that, owing to a habit that still prevails of taking employment for only two or three months, the total number of Africans employed at some time in the year may be two or three times as great.

The first I happened to see of the three main fields of operation was the diamond working of the Sierra Leone Selection Trust, which holds a profit-sharing monopoly of diamonds for the whole territory. At Yengema, the main centre in the far north-eastern corner of the Territory, the number of workers on the books in November 1938 was 1,634, but the total has been as high as 2,000. Though here as elsewhere the company included representatives of tribes from homes as far apart as Senegal and Calabar, far the greater number were in this instance from the local or neighbouring districts: actually 873 Konos, 461 Mendis, 93 Kissy.

The second, and as to numbers nominally employed the most considerable, mining area in Sierra Leone was impossible to see in detail and assess. Its significance,

however, was very different. In the parts extending from Mogburaka, on the northern railway, far away to the north, there is a scattered series of alluvial workings—accessible for the larger part only on foot—producing chiefly gold. Figures recorded at the district head-quarters at Mabonto indicated that in the first quarter of 1938 some nineteen different concerns employed as many as 5,826 labourers. Of these no fewer than 4,011 were described as 'tributors'. It must be said that the opportunities of 'tributing' had produced a visible activity unusual in neighbouring districts; but it is not so certain that gaudier clothing, more lorry travel, and a greater volume of petty trading represent the best that is to be looked for from the development of the country's mineral resources. The outward influence on the accessible parts of the district—some would say the interference with the normal routine of native life—seemed fully greater than on the well-ordered diamond fields. The only merit of the system is in fact its freedom. The tributors are in effect mining *métayers*, who receive from their employer, it may be a minimum of tools, but chiefly the backing of the £100 licence required to undertake mining—in return the tributor surrenders a half-share, receiving only £3. 10s. for every ounce of gold recovered. The control exercised either by licensee or by government is necessarily imperfect and the temptation to indulge in systematic illicit dealing is most undesirable—particularly in a diamond-bearing country. On the face of it the £100 licence seems to serve no useful purpose—only two or three of the nineteen 'employers' were men or companies of any standing, one for example which had ventured on a considerable dredging scheme which should be operating shortly. There is reason to think that the right to mine on very small alluvial propositions would be at least as satisfactorily vested in the control of local Native Authorities.

The third, and in itself the largest single mining enterprise in Sierra Leone, is again of a totally different character, the working of the haematite ore deposit at Marampa by the Sierra Leone Development Company. The mining at Marampa is rather of the character of quarrying, involving

the removal, with only a minimum of washing by way of treatment, of two solid mountains of ore. The ore is carried by some fifty-two miles of privately owned railway for direct shipment from an ocean wharf at Pepel, up river from Freetown.

It is an obvious feature of base metal mining, but one to be noted as distinguishing its problems from those of the more usual African ventures in gold and diamonds, that there is a severe limit to the possibility of storing reserves of such bulky ore. Marketing difficulties are therefore apt to cause fluctuations in the demand for labour more severe even than on diamond mines, where storage is simple and work may proceed without regard for any but very long-range marketing considerations. In November 1938 the total number employed at Marampa was some 3,700 or 3,900; earlier—at the development stage—it has been 4,500 or more: it has at times been considerably less. It also affects labour policy that the directors expect this mine to be worked out in only eight or ten years. But already some extension of the life originally estimated is promised by the unexpected discovery of an apparently large supply of ore in 'powdered' form, and Government cannot afford to take an unduly short view. Moreover, the same company is about to begin new operations, which include the building of some eighty miles of railway to a new site in the Tonkilili district. There is therefore no immediate likelihood of a reduced demand here for African labour.

So far the Sierra Leone demand has been more than met, with the possible exception that the Selection Trust have found their 'supply' threatened during a period when the price of palm-kernels was unusually good. At Marampa lately the supply of labour was obviously in excess of the real demand. One morning I stood by, watching certainly many hundreds clamouring for thirty or forty vacancies. Without any suspicion of undue pressure from any source this company, 'Delco', was able to get all the labour it wanted. Being content with a very low grade of efficiency the company was also dispensing with anything but the

minimum of mechanization. It is for the State to determine, if possible with the intelligent co-operation of the mine management, how far it is wise, or expedient, to be content with such merely prodigal expenditure of the available man-power—and whether mines in general might not be encouraged, or compelled, to resort to mechanical aid rather than calculate entirely on the use of African sinews.

The labour problems of the Gold Coast are older and perhaps more clearly defined. Development having been less sudden, the average number employed in mining (chiefly gold, but also diamonds and manganese) has for some years been in the neighbourhood of 40,000. The chief source of supply is the Northern Territories, French as well as British, bordering the Sahara, but it is worth recording that 'Colony' natives are employed in fair numbers and that mine-workers are not so exclusively Northern Territory immigrants as is loosely supposed. Any estimate of future labour requirements must depend on the interpretation put on several factors. New mineral discoveries in the colony are always possible, though it must be said that the great expansion of gold-mining since 1932 has been due in almost every instance to the development of deposits of which even thirty years ago there were known indications. Exploitation has been encouraged by the favourable price of gold, by mechanical improvements, and not least by the great advance in knowledge and understanding of tropical hygiene since the beginning of this century.

It may be that, unless there should be new mineral finds, the total of 40,000 is not likely to be greatly exceeded in the near future. Many of the mines now working are at the development stage, which normally requires a larger labour force than when the plant is at full production. The Ariston mine, for example, increased its output in 1937 more than 5,000 oz. though it employed an average of only 2,699 men against an average in 1936 of 4,320. On the other hand, the reduction of the Ariston labour force is

partly due to a deliberate policy of mechanization. The more intelligent mine managements realize that mining development may not yet have reached its peak, also that the general economic development of the colony must restrict the 'cheap' labour supply. Even now railways and transport, building, if not the beginnings of industrial development, at least cocoa and general agriculture, are all competing factors in the labour market; and it is worth repeating that an average of 40,000 employed represents many more individuals. Nowhere is there such crude 'abundance' of labour as at the new iron mine in backward and undeveloped Sierra Leone.

Gold Coast mine managers, who are in at least as good a position as the Government to form a judgement, are inclined to go to work on the conservative assumption that the demand for labour, even if it does not grow, is at least unlikely to fall in the near future below its present level. Not only on the Gold Coast but also in Sierra Leone and other parts where general economic development is much more backward, Government and those who have the shaping of policy would do well to accept the corollary. In Africa at large the interests of the country, if not those of employers themselves, demand a much more economical use of man-power, that is, at once a more sparing use of numbers, and greater care for the physical and moral well-being of the labourers who are now employed, and for their efficiency.

On this broad issue of policy a Belgian Commission laid down in 1928 the then revolutionary principle that the number of adults recruited in any one year must not exceed a small percentage, normally 5 per cent. For many South African districts and some in Nyasaland the number of absentee adults has been estimated at 50 per cent. and more. M. Ryckmans, Governor-General of the Congo, recapitulated before his Council in June 1938 the 'demographic' principles on which Belgian policy is based—for example, that outside labour demands must not disregard the work needed to maintain the domestic food-supply, and

above all that policy cannot disregard the necessity for the population to maintain and reproduce itself, natural increase being threatened where any unduly large proportion of adult males are segregated away from their womenkind in labour camps. The Congo no doubt suffers exceptionally from the absolute scantiness of its African population and its poor standards of physique. But the relevant point is that the Belgians have realized that a large force of casual labourers drawn from every home in the country is far more upsetting to the balance of social life than a smaller force withdrawn from tribal areas, not necessarily permanently, but with their families. (As things are, many educated town Africans maintain a base with relations on the family 'farm', and so loss of rights to land is not a necessary implication.)

Whatever the difference in conditions, British authorities and students have much to learn from the more thorough and careful approach made by the Belgians. There is no British counterpart to M. Ryckmans's study, which marshals fuller statistics than any British colony could muster, and the business world should realize that there are more severe limits than they are wont to allow to the ordering of their ventures by the strictest rules of economics. It is often claimed, for example, that the wages offered or the degree of mechanization attempted must depend on the probable life of the mine, or that rough inefficient labour alone 'pays'. What pays in this short view may be ruinously costly to the life of the colony that tolerates such a short-sighted policy. But it is perhaps reasonable to judge that, quite apart from official Government intervention, West African mining authorities are learning that in their own interests they must give constant attention to the welfare, which is also the efficiency, of African mine-workers. Progress may be expected in particular from the most important single group, the Gold Coast gold-mines—many of which are virtually new mines on old workings—as their managers make headway with the now absorbing task of reconstructing what were often very rough and imperfect beginnings. Like hotels one has known, they are

in the throes of coming under new management. But this is on the whole much more hopeful and efficient than the old, even if technical problems have so far engrossed the managements at the expense of those concerning the human agents on whose work they depend.

It needed no outside pressure to teach mine managements to take care of the health of their expensive white staff. If only for business reasons, the cleanliness and drainage of mine camps normally get such attention as the terrain will allow. Not only do minerals often occur in inconvenient localities, but in addition camp sites have occasionally been fixed in a hurry, or without such consideration as a stronger medical staff might have ensured. Some mines, however, including among the newer ones 'Delco' at Marampa, have a great deal to teach those Government Departments responsible for the housing of European officers. In a country where efficiency greatly depends on physical comfort, true economy demands houses offering the maximum of domestic convenience, together with adequate protection against a host of evils, which include ruinous and depressing damp as well as heat and mosquitoes.

On most camps there is now some attempt, not necessarily by pressure of Government regulation, to provide decent housing also for African labourers, besides healthier conditions of work. A piped supply of water which is also potable is still exceptional enough to attract notice where it exists. But sanitation and care for outward cleanliness quite often reach a very high standard, and merely essential sanitary measures may be supplemented by considered care for health, welfare, and recreation.

On two or three mines workers are given houses rent free; more normally they make some payment. Wives and families may be allowed or even encouraged, though as a rule the 'encouragement' does not amount to more than permitting families to occupy what were originally bachelor or perhaps 'three-boy' barracks. Gardens may similarly be permitted either on mine land or in the near neighbourhood, but as a rule only if the workers themselves take the

initiative. There seemed to be no set policy of making provision for a settled or even a semi-permanent mining population. It may be that independent, apparently uncontrolled, purely 'native' villages, such as I saw six years ago on some Nigerian tin-mines, would not now be allowed for regular labourers on Gold Coast mining property. But the Sierra Leone Government had not learnt even this lesson when it allowed, or encouraged, the Sierra Leone Development Company to leave 4,000 employees to find their own living-quarters in existing neighbouring villages. Lunsar, the principal village, was in no way equipped for such an influx as has increased its total of taxable houses from 6 in 1927 to 50 in 1930, and 354 in 1938. The effect of the Sierra Leone house-tax is, moreover, that the majority of the 354 houses, though in appearance rather large African huts of a common rectangular pattern, differ from the normal in containing from eight or ten up to fourteen small, dark, airless cubicles. These their African owners, including the local chief, let at from 5s. to 8s. a month to workers, or to the usual floating population of work-seekers, traders, and hangers-on. The village has no kind of social amenities, not even a water-supply, and there is no local Government officer. Some years ago the Government imposed regulations for the 'layout' of the more recent additions, and latterly has insisted on the company's providing a minimum of workmen's houses on its own property. Those so far provided are of an unusually simple and primitive type, and the situation is far from having been adequately cleared up.

On the Gold Coast, where the law requires that houses be provided, health authorities and some of the managements combine to insist on solid building, the mines chiefly from a desire to avoid expense for renewal and upkeep. It is a moot point, but it is possible that building of a superior native design, reproducible by Africans in their homes, might be more educative and more suitable than some of the heavy concrete types now favoured by the mines, and demanded by the health authorities. In a metropolitan area, where certainly the burden falls on the

individual and not on a company, I met evidence that rigid insistence on the use of sandcrete may actually provoke overcrowding, so that a well-meant reform may have the same effect as the old and ill-advised Sierra Leone house-tax. Where so much outlay is needed to make conditions what they ought to be, any avoidable excess of expenditure on one item may impair the balance of the whole.

The ultimate question is still how to raise African standards. Wage rates are now by any reasonable measure extremely low,¹ and it is not quite the whole explanation—as those employers maintain who make the least visible effort to improve efficiency—that African efficiency warrants no more. Nor is it sufficient to say that there is inevitable ‘exploitation’ of the weak. The workers are fortunately not wholly dependent. In West Africa even taxation is light—in the Gold Coast Colony there is none—and nowhere is there any suspicion of pressure being used to drive men to the labour market. Yet labour is seldom short. At least in Sierra Leone there is on the contrary sometimes a vociferous demand for such employment as offers. Any ‘drive’ there is comes from the desire to escape the natural poverty and restriction of tribal life by seizing any new opportunity. The only final hope therefore lies in general African economic development—such as is in truth most likely to be promoted by effective use of the resources made available by mining enterprise. It is already evident that Gold Coast mines draw negligibly for their labour from the tribes enjoying the benefits of the cocoa industry—Akwatia out of a total of 1,899 had only 212 in all from Colony and Ashanti together, 110 from its own Akim country: Arison 1,202 out of 3,282¹ Amalgamated Banket Areas 1,451 out of 4,571: most of these were even so from the undeveloped western province: the total number of Akwapims, for example, was four in all, on the three mines. Only the opening of alternative avenues elsewhere is likely to reduce the supply of labour to that point at which

¹ I have heard it said that the daily wage, from 6*d.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* or 1*s.* 6*d.*, seemed to bear some relation to the local price of a chicken.

scarcity will bring higher wages. Growing discontents may very well compel resort to legislation to give the protection of a minimum wage. But in the long run there is perhaps more to hope for from a policy which concentrates on fixing and enforcing such conditions of welfare as will accustom the people to higher standards of food and housing, improve their health and efficiency, and so in good time make them better able to insist for themselves on maintaining and improving their own conditions—which would, of course, necessitate higher wages.

There is certainly immediate need to consider and improve upon methods of payment. The Selection Trust alone has surmounted the pay-staff difficulties of which others complain, and organizes orderly weekly payments as a matter of routine. Other mines pay only monthly, though most will at least pay immediately on completion of the 'ticket'. There is, however, insufficient excuse for setting apart one whole day a month for payments, a practice which is almost asking for a monthly orgy in which hard-earned money is wastefully squandered. A few mines make some provision for advances, which may be very necessary for men who have newly made the long journey, for example, from the Northern Territories.

On these and kindred points West Africa has a great deal to learn from the practice and experience of the Witwatersrand Chamber of Mines, especially perhaps of its Native Labour Association. On the Gold Coast the local chamber is gaining strength and assurance, but it suffers from the excessive individualism of the units. Unlike their stronger South African fellows, West African managers are subject to the constant necessity of submitting the details of plans and policy, not to a powerful local executive like the Rand Gold Producers' Committee, but to a host of independent and uncoordinated British Boards of Directors. But even so there is no reason why they should not adapt to West Coast needs standardized methods of payment, including possibly deferred pay, and more certainly the use of savings banks, besides provision of travelling,

feeding, and resting facilities for men coming from a distance.¹

West African conditions, however, make it difficult for local employers to follow Rand and Copper Belt practice at its strongest and most original. The Southern compound system, even because of its undesirable barracking, has at least made easier the studied and altogether praiseworthy improvement of the worker's diet. It has also simplified medical and health control and supervision. It is true that some Western mines make an effort to see that food of proper quality is available in necessary quantities. Many have mine stores, though these are as a rule small and tentative. In Sierra Leone, peculiar in being predominantly rice-eating, the Selection Trust, after some experience of shortage and 'cornering', guarantees a supply to its workers at a uniform maximum price of 2*d.* or 3*d.* This is certainly more popular than the 'Delco' plan of issuing a free daily rice ration. The latter device, to be welcomed in itself as a recognition by the employers that there is a problem of nutrition, inevitably invites the workers' retort that they would rather have more cash. It also raises the question—if rice, which is certainly not enough by itself, why not meat as well, or other essentials of a full, balanced diet?

It is true that religious scruples, especially those of Mohammedan workers, complicate the problem of feeding. But any project of social betterment is peculiarly difficult on the West Coast also because labour is unorganized as well as fairly easily obtainable. Several Gold Coast mine managers, who themselves volunteered the view that West African labour is on the whole inefficient because the men are physically unfit, professed also to feel themselves inhibited from efforts to find a remedy. Labour, they complained, is irregular and uncontrolled, the individuals practically unidentifiable: as it is they keep more men on their books than they need, to make sure of an average

¹ A Labour Exchange was this year being organized at Kumasi, and rest camps were promised for the use of men doing the long march to or from the Northern Territories.

attendance; why should they take the trouble and expense of organizing the care of mere birds of passage?

It is at least part answer to this objection that those managements have their reward who take the widest view in their calculations of what 'pays'. With visible benefit, a few employers have realized that in African conditions they must do more than the bare minimum for the welfare of their workers. I would illustrate from features of three of the best West Coast mines I happened to see, those of the African Manganese Company at Nsuta, Gold Coast, and the two Selection Trust diamond ventures, at Akwatia, Gold Coast, and Yengema, Sierra Leone. On all three the camps as a whole were admirably kept, with care for gardens and trees, in an obviously studied attempt to make life not only as healthy but also as pleasant as possible. This is in itself a valuable object lesson in the raw conditions of primitive Africa, and the outward appearances are not belied by the general air at once of consideration and of considerateness that governs their work. The strong point of Nsuta, one of the few with adequate pure water, is certainly the health and welfare work; and imitators would do well to observe that Nsuta, by keeping two regular medical officers, avoids the danger that well-organized welfare work will suffer at the hands of indifferent or inexperienced substitutes when the principal goes on leave. Nsuta also has gained immensely by having enjoyed unusual continuity of service from its European staff—the strong *esprit de corps* being clearly both effect and cause of its high standards. The two Selection Trust ventures are outstanding for the example they show of how alluvial mining can and should be done. Their admirably efficient cleaning up and levelling may be induced by wholesome fear of making breeding-grounds for mosquitoes. It is none the less in overwhelming contrast not only to the devastated areas left by alluvial digging in South Africa, but also to Nigerian tin-mines as they were when I happened to see them some years ago.

Labour policy and its effects are similarly reassuring. Nsuta, in the first place, is remarkable in that it claims to

rely very largely on *local* labour, and to enjoy a high degree of stability in its labour force. It is true the total force is only 1,200, but Nsuta lies in the heart of the rapidly developing Tarkwa gold-mining area, helped in its competition for available labour by the fact that underground work is negligible, but also by its high reputation as a considerate employer offering the best living-conditions. Sierra Leone Selection Trust, partly because it is less accessible, contrasts with its chief neighbour, the Development Company, in depending also very largely on local labour, and there is evidence that though drawn from a simple primitive people their labour force is astonishingly stable. Akwatia, on the other hand, with a complement last November of 1,899, also highly stable, drew to the extent of 1,383 of this total on the Northern Territories. This is partly because Akwatia lies in or near good cocoa country, among the better-off and more independent Akims. Its relations with labour are such that this mine has been singled out by a Government Officer as almost unique in that it is able to dispense altogether with the system of disciplinary fines which seems to be normal elsewhere.

It was my very clear impression that the complaints to be heard of the irregular attendance and the inefficiency of African labour vary in inverse proportion to the consideration with which labour is treated, reaching the minimum on mines of this or similar class. Two Gold Coast gold-mine managers, fully aware of the reasons for inefficiency and willing to co-operate with the Government for their removal, obtained for me figures showing that the number at work ranges from 72 to 82 per cent. of the total enrolled, an average of 75-6 per cent. Others hardly know whom they employ, or perhaps even care, considering that their hands are going to attain all the efficiency they ever will in two or three months. To these I venture to suggest that it is fairly certain that their workers, faced by managerial unconcern and indifference, 'get their own back' by negligent work, poor attendance, and studied indifference on their own part.

It is not clear that the British Government view of mines and mining policy is at all adequate to its responsibility. In all dependent colonies it is peculiarly the Government's duty to determine and enforce the conditions on which it is to allow exploiting companies the privilege of working the national resources, and to ensure that this serves the ends of national development. It is a serious and unfortunate legacy of the age of *laissez-faire* that the State is not everywhere the sole mineral owner. In Northern Nigeria (as yet the more important part of Nigeria for tin and gold) half the royalties go to the Niger Company. In the Gold Coast Colony mineral rights belong to the surface owner, in theory the native people, in practice the chief or the 'Stool'. South Africa began with a no less vigorous doctrine of private owners' rights, but there the Kruger Government laid the foundations of a sound mining policy which should have served as the model. The Colonial Office, however, has still to take even the initial step of organizing a strong central Mines Department to provide technical direction of a calibre which is beyond the resources of most single colonies. At present it lacks so much as a permanent Mining Adviser, with the inevitable result that colonies have made some thoroughly bad bargains. The profit-sharing lease of diamonds to Sierra Leone Selection Trust is almost the only evidence that the example of the great South African mining leases has made any impression in West Africa. This defect of machinery demands attention and speedy remedy.

As things are, and labouring under this prior disability, West African Governments—and the Colonial Office behind them—seem to be governed in their attempts to evolve a social or labour policy by considerations that fail to meet the problem as a whole. In the first place the attitude to the stronger mines is at once shy, distrustful, and unduly deferential. Poor as the colonies are, and chronically short of revenue, their Governments are so grateful for any revenue-producing development that they will both tax rich mines too lightly, and accept a plea of poverty from weaker ventures whose 'development' can be

too dearly bought. Alarmed by disturbing social effects which they forget are due to the imperfect control of mining, Governments have shown a purely negative distrust of mining as peculiarly disturbing *per se*—to a state of things which palpably is nowhere static. 'Detribalization' is becoming a bogey, whereas it needs to be faced as an inevitable development.

Since a well-known dispatch of Mr. Ormsby Gore's in July 1937, it is official policy—so far useful—to make benevolent plans for the evolution of a Labour Department in every colony. Since Labour M.P.s ask persistent questions, it is explained that provision, legislative and administrative, is being made for those institutions or services which have been helpful at home—wages boards, conciliation, workmen's compensation, trade unions. In the colonies themselves the administrations display an exaggerated dread of strikes. It is true that in African conditions strikes may be peculiarly disorderly and troublesome, but if employers were more often left to wrestle by themselves with the consequences of their own actions, they might more quickly realize where the fault is theirs. It is in any event hopeless to try to remedy working conditions by organizing African labour on Western lines without taking account of the fact that we have to deal with what is still to a great extent a floating population, drawn from scores of different tribes, and almost entirely illiterate.

There are incidental difficulties about African trade unions. Many will affirm that workers' complaints are adequately dealt with by their own tribal headmen, group representatives, and it is commonly suggested that this is the ready-made basis of labour organization. On the other hand, officials who themselves greatly favour this home-made device will admit the abuses that arise from the habit headmen have of exacting a 'dash' for their services. It is probably often hopeless to look for employment without first 'squaring' the headman, and headmen have actually been known to keep trade brisk for themselves by getting their men 'sacked' and other hands taken on.

But the more fundamental obstacle in the way of

organizing African labour is the incredible confusion that arises from the impossibility not merely of keeping any complete register of workers but even of identifying the individuals engaged. On one mine I watched the under-manager engaging new hands, his task being to select thirty or forty of the fittest-looking from a crowd of many hundreds. To give preference to any with previous experience he depended on the ability of boss-boys to pick out former employees. In the end those chosen were marched off through the crowd with hands linked to prevent them exchanging with a substitute (who would pay a 'dash' for winning the job, and enable the successful candidate to make a small profit for no work). There appears to be a regular traffic in employment cards, at a premium by all accounts of several shillings. It is not unknown for boys to sign on for two shifts on one day (and work neither!) and certainly quite usual for them to join another gang on the same mine when legitimately sacked for some offence.

Undoubtedly these irregularities are worst with the more casual employers, but the situation demands a concerted attempt to find a simple, satisfactory plan of identification. Several mines themselves register finger-prints of their employees; only one, so far as I know, issues with official help a card showing both finger-prints and a photograph. Until it is reasonably possible thus to establish the identity of the individuals concerned it seems premature to hope for effective trade unions. Workmen's compensation also is difficult till it is possible to cope with the formidable problem of making compensation, for the loss of an unidentifiable bread-winner who becomes a mine casualty, to his unidentifiable dependants at home. Not only is compensation for a disease like miners' phthisis impracticable but it is impossible even to bring home responsibility for the prevalence of the disease. The unhappy record of South Africa in this matter of identification misleads those who would protect West African workers. To any one, black or white, with any knowledge of previous experiments the suggestion infallibly calls up memories of the notorious South African pass laws, which have been made an engine

of intolerable administrative persecution without even successfully establishing the identity of the average pass-bearer. The Kenya system fails too, especially by allowing the identity card to be misused as a certificate of character. Yet it should not pass the wit of man to devise a passport or identity disk which, while better serving its purpose, shall be proof against such abuse. It seems to me a matter in which it is essential to secure the sympathetic co-operation not only of Government and Chamber of Mines, but also of the Trades Union Congress.

When it comes to improving African standards—above all by helping Africans to make the best of their new conditions—the ruling preoccupation alike of officials and non-officials with the preservation of older African tribal life and forms hinders rational progress. Very few of those in control have conquered the old feeling that life on mines is unsettling and dangerous (as no doubt it may be), and that Africans would in all circumstances be better to stay at home. For this reason the reforms carried out on many of the best mines are almost entirely due to mining employers and owe little or nothing to direct Government action on behalf of the governed. The idea of Labour Departments is scarcely anywhere more than two or three years old. It is so far a sign of grace that British Governments are showing belated recognition of the principle laid down by the Belgians: in rather a negative way their policy would be to restrict emigration where its excess threatens the integrity and future of the population. The effects of past neglect of this principle are not yet statistically demonstrable, though on scrutiny the latest Union of South Africa census figures indicate at least complete stagnation if not actual decline of population in certain of the more heavily recruited districts which I know well. Warning is therefore well taken.

But in adopting a strictly tribal basis for its policy in all things the British Governments look past certain facts of West African life. In Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast, and I doubt not this is true of the Nigerian tin-fields, actual inquiry establishes the point that there is already a vast

mixing of tribes. It struck me at once that distant villages in Sierra Leone, much more the towns everywhere, are apart altogether from European 'contact' much less homogeneous even than those I was used to in predominantly Basuto, Zulu, or Pondo parts of South Africa. At Marampa on a recruiting day there were solid batches of work-seekers from every considerable tribal unit in the whole protectorate, and the mines I sampled invariably had at least a few representatives from every corner of West Africa, again from Senegal to Calabar. For such reasons policy would do well to set itself more than it does to providing for the welfare of mine workers as they actually are. Many of the West African peoples are not unaccustomed to wandering, without necessary disaster to themselves or to their tribal life. There seems no reason in the idea that to allow wretched and disorderly conditions in mining camps will somehow help to preserve for the African an ideal and ordered social life at home, and that to provide decent conditions for his family as well as himself is to endanger his home society. It by no means follows that migrants, certainly such habitual migrants as the Mussulman Northern Territory labourers, lose touch with their tribes. Mrs. Leith Ross in her book *African Women* gives evidence that Ibo women are quite accustomed to temporary sojourns in the towns with their men folk. Why, then, should it be thought dangerous to tribal life to make provision for wives and families in mining areas?

In any case those who do in fact adopt a totally new way of life deserve more consideration than they get. Obviously, innumerable Africans settle for years away from their tribal homes—in trades, in domestic service, and certainly also as mine workers. At least one I met had been over thirty years on one gold-mine, several had been over twenty years. On the well-run Selection Trust property in Sierra Leone very detailed figures, provided by the kindness of the manager, showed that though work had been in full swing only since 1933 at least one employee had been with the Company over ten years, over 600 out of the 1,634 for four years or more, and not fewer than 1,100 for over two

years. Measures are demanded which will help these to make the most of their new conditions. The essential point is that adult men employed for a term of even two years should be able to make homes and bring up children in the place where their life is lived. It is in no way to discount the importance of preserving and conserving the ultimate tribal life if we insist also that vastly more must be done for this class. The aim should be not so much—as on the Belgian copper-mines—the deliberate ‘stabilizing’ of a small industrialized community as to make these labour-camps social units and fit them into the new life of the country as a whole.

Even on a short view, the aim of conserving the tribe is unlikely to be attained by making life uncomfortable for migrants. In Northern Rhodesia, if not so deliberately in West Africa, British policy leans in the direction of encouraging men to return home at frequent intervals—the wish of the mines themselves to provide more fully for women and children is quietly discouraged. But the resultant discontinuity has the unfortunate effect of impairing efficiency both at home and in employment—Roan Antelope statistics point clearly to a relatively high accident rate among new-comers or men recently returned—and of course constant breaks in employment enormously increase the difficulty of trade union or other protective organization.

It is surely impolitic to drive men back to the bare living they have hoped to better—and foolish to ignore the unashamed and repeated exactions made by chiefs and families at home on men coming back with wages in their pockets, an influence which is probably at least as great a cause of detribalization as the attractions of ‘westernized’ life. Voluntary bonds are the strongest—like those that professedly bind the British Commonwealth. African (not to say Scottish) experience is conclusive that prosperous migrants not only keep their sentimental loyalty, but have far more natural inducement to return, to show off their success even as local benefactors. Nor on the other hand is there any reason whatever to discourage men from setting

out betimes to make permanent homes or places of retirement where they have spent their working days—in or near such a well-established town as, say, Tarkwa. The few who would thus settle are no doubt only a handful, but their contentment and example matter.

The change of policy the situation demands is, rather than anything revolutionary, the remedying of a serious omission. In considering the needs of mine workers it is necessary to distinguish. At any time a large proportion of mine 'boys', possibly even a majority, are in fact boys or young unmarried men. For these the 'camp' is entirely suitable or necessary—and for this class the West African mines might even, in return for increased responsibilities, quite properly be allowed to exercise stricter control (they not unreasonably complain now of indiscipline); also they might certainly be encouraged to apply more of the organization used on the Copper Belt, including especially the ordered diet. On the Gold Coast mines there is another large body consisting of regular migrants from the Northern Territories. Islam gives these unusual cohesion. They have their own permanently resident headmen, and are certainly in no serious danger of the detribalization which is so much dreaded. Coming and going as they do with great regularity, camp life sufficiently meets their needs.

But these are by no means the whole, as is loosely supposed. The idea of the camp, induced in the mind of many mine managers by actual memories of South African 'compounds', so entirely dominates that hardly any one tries to provide for the different needs of other important classes for which camp life is undesirable. Clerks and artisans perhaps have special 'lines', but there are also numbers of gang foremen, boss-boys, and others who are to all intents and purposes permanent workers. Above all there are, certainly in Sierra Leone but also on the Gold Coast, casual and shiftless workers from districts much nearer than the Northern Territories. These are really more typical African tribesmen and their social system is far more disruptable than that of the Islamic Northerners. For them the mere mining camp may well be seriously harmful.

Nothing less than real *villages* will avail to anchor them and give them stability in their new surroundings. It is on these that the future of the country depends and indeed—on the social principles laid down by M. Ryckmans—the preservation of the man-power which is its very existence. Given homes, with health services and schools, and certainly also land at least for gardens, it should be possible to maintain even on mines a good deal of the normal life of the older Africa.

It is inevitable, since the present system provides only for temporary workers, that the opportunities of the mining camp should now create that nuisance so much complained of, the 'mushroom' villages of 'hangers-on' which are to be found on the outskirts of even the very best-run mines. It is an extraordinary feature of West Africa that the mining areas as a whole, in spite of their very considerable agglomerations of people, are as often as not without a resident administrative officer. The actual mining properties are in effect self-governing units, contracted out of their districts, providing and managing all their own services. But these so-called 'villages' on their fringes, occasionally even on the mining property itself, are outside the mine's manorial jurisdiction—or any other control. They are even outside the wholly beneficent authority of the mine's resident Health Officer. I have often visited these Alsatias, ostentatiously avoided and of course much abused by the mining authorities, yet forgotten and neglected by the Government—whose nearest representative may be sixty miles away. The best of the mining employers have voluntarily, in the pursuit of their own interests, done so much that Governments have all but completely neglected their own share—the trouble being that the mines are not yet felt to be an essential part of the new Africa that is visibly coming into being. More often than not these so-called 'mushroom' villages are what they are because they lack the very rudiments of government, and are thus left to their own devices, with no supervision, and no help whatever from the administration.

Certainly West African colonies are invariably short of

administrative staff. This in itself calls for a well-considered remedy which will take more stock of the additional work invariably necessitated by mining or any other kind of economic development. No doubt the Governments have been caught unprepared, but they would also seem unduly preoccupied with the idea that it is necessary to adapt practice to African conditions. Uninterested in these villages because they are not tribal units, in this crucial instance they overlook and neglect the elementary duties resting on any Government anywhere. It may be said there are already 'villages', as distinct from workmen's camps, but they are villages utterly bereft of the local government services called for by the coming together, not only of the workers' wives and children, but of legitimate traders and others ministering to the domestic and professional needs of this community, and even to their amusement. These services are properly the responsibility not of the mines, but of the civil government.

The administrative problem these units present is in some respects highly complicated. There is frequent need already not only of slum clearances and rebuilding but of rent restriction and control—where, for example, private owners, including chiefs, batten on what they exact from work-seekers or other visitors. The 'mushroom' villages almost *ex hypothesi* own the jurisdiction of no chief, and are in any case too complicated for control by strictly tribal forms of government. They are, however, well adapted to experiment in new institutions, having on the spot numerous clerks and others, used to responsibility, who should be admirable material for Township Boards. Rightly viewed, these concentrations are a neglected opportunity. In proportion to their need, their people should be more than usually receptive of instruction, as they are certainly more easily provided with schools, and open to the teaching of example.

The degree of responsibility resting on mining and on Government authorities respectively has in fact become confused and needs restating. The unusual dimensions of

many mining undertakings makes them difficult material for control by the district officer in the routine of his administrative duty. Government Departments of Mines are perhaps notoriously weak. One consequence of the discretion almost invariably left to these great enterprises is that the mine is far too frequently an *imperium in imperio*—a most unsatisfactory position. Starting work in a raw country, the mine has everything to provide for itself, certainly all those services for which at home it would be paying local rates to a local authority, and sometimes even railways. The African mine pays no rates and receives few services and is naturally indisposed to undertake the expense of extending its own services beyond its own boundaries and jurisdiction. At the same time Government officers are shy of intruding on the mine's preserves. Hence it is that the 'mushroom' village, or in a few extreme cases the 'native' town which has grown up to 'house' mine labour, normally presents such deplorable conditions of insanitary overcrowding, rack-renting, thieving, and general lawlessness. It would make for better things if the principle were accepted that in so far as mining activity is responsible for creating a new problem the mining authority should be required to contribute to the cost of meeting that problem—in other words, be mulcted in local rates or some other direct charge to provide for the expanded needs of its own neighbourhood. But Governments for their part must shoulder responsibility for providing the social services, including schools, which the new conditions especially call for.

The taxation of mining enterprise is a point on which West African and other Crown Colonies have much to learn from the Union of South Africa. The cost of development in a raw country is admittedly heavier in itself than opening a new mine would be, say, on the West Rand, where essential services like water and electricity would usually be shared with established undertakings; and there is certainly an economic limit to the admissibility of new burdens. But equally certainly that limit has not been reached in West Africa. It is only in Northern Nigeria that,

as in Northern Rhodesia, a Chartered Company takes the cream of the mineral royalties. It should be realized also that the almost rough treatment accorded the mines by the Kruger Government and its successors has proved highly beneficial. A very efficient system of 'rationalization' was forced upon the Rand industry, and the almost coddled West African mines, whose beginnings were often conspicuously inefficient, are only beginning to benefit from the influence and example of the great Rand 'Groups'.

But such reforms as a better village system may necessitate no additional burden. Sometimes a fraction more of the available revenue could reasonably be earmarked for the needs of the areas in which it is produced—whereas needy Governments are now tempted to direct the whole to general funds. Moreover, His Majesty's Government in Great Britain owes it to its dependencies to remedy the palpable injustice that the full weight of British Income Tax, and in addition 'N.D.C.', falls so heavily on colonial enterprise. It leaves very little scope for colonial taxation, within the economic limit, that colonial companies now have 5s. 6d. in the £, and N.D.C., deducted at what can by no stretch of courtesy be called 'the source'. It is true His Majesty's Government have now been brought to recognize this inequity to the extent that it allows an abatement of 50 per cent. by way of 'double' income-tax relief. My suspicions and curiosity being aroused, I investigated this point and made the discovery that, presumably because colonial taxation is too light—which may be because colonial taxpayers are too influential—several of the wealthiest West African mining companies claim no relief whatever. The highest I could discover was 1s. 4d., in one year only, and only a few enjoyed so much as 1s. abatement. This looks on the face of it like a 'nest egg'. There would seem to be a clear case for seizing the opportunity thus offered and making certain that the companies earn the full 50 per cent. relief from British tax.

In conclusion, the better mines on the Coast amply confirmed and strengthened the belief I expressed in a recent book, *Africa Emergent* (a belief for which I have been

especially criticized), that mining enterprise offers definite economic advantages which should contribute to the welfare of African society as a whole. The dangers and disadvantages can be guarded against, or even turned to account, as in the case of mine 'villages'. But Colonial Governments have nevertheless need to learn that immediate benefits can be too dearly paid for. My latest tour also confirmed another conclusion, that there is no satisfactory mean between the powerful company, in effect the 'Groups', and the independent small man. It might be helpful, and it certainly would be immensely popular, to vest a good deal of the control of alluvial digging in the hands of the local 'Native Authority'. In any case, companies must be given to understand that the principles of 'trusteeship', if they have any meaning, make African mining a privilege and not a right, and it is for the State to determine and enforce the terms and conditions on which an enterprise shall be conducted. Any company unable or unwilling to meet what must be required of it in the peculiar circumstances of Africa should be allowed, or compelled, to close down.

The State for its part cannot fulfil its obligations by adopting a merely negative attitude, as if it were its only duty to interfere to stop or palliate unsatisfactory or unsavoury working conditions. Nor is its positive duty material and physical only, touching wages or housing. It would sometimes be better, as things are, to be content to spend less on housing than there might be more to spare for moral building—education in all its forms. Students and even officials are at the moment too much preoccupied with the African past. It is quite natural to fear that, uprooted from their customary life, Africans may suffer evils believed to be the inevitable result of 'industrialization'. But life even in mining camps could be made to facilitate the work of social reconstruction. The number of families now disturbed, directly or indirectly, could be greatly reduced if the present wasteful system were reformed. But in any case the numbers affected should not be exaggerated, nor is there reason to expect any very large or rapid increase in

the demand for labour. To draw off 10,000 mine workers in Sierra Leone, or even the much larger body of wage-earners in the Gold Coast, need not cause even so much social dislocation as it now does if more care were taken to satisfy their social needs. Governments as well as conserving the past must face the problem of ensuring the wholesome *resettlement* of those members of the population who of their own accord are adventuring into the fresh fields of economic opportunity.

IV

AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT (*continued*)

(b) *Negative Example of Sierra Leone*

(c) *By African enterprise—the Gold Coast Cocoa Industry*

(b) It was our original thesis that Africa can cease to be a 'problem' only in proportion as the continent is made more productive of the material means to support a better life. It now appears that, in spite of social dislocation due to such large-scale production, Western capital, even in the form of mining enterprise, has been by no means wholly disruptive, as is sometimes supposed. The causes of disturbance and some of the remedies are at least obvious, and some of the best mines set an altogether new and hopeful example of efficiency, much of their best work having been possible just because they commanded unusually great material and capital resources. The evidence of two more isolated fragments of recent African history supports this judgement. Education, which should be the moral accompaniment of the contribution made by Western capital enterprise, has made unusual progress in the old colony of Sierra Leone, yet failed of its full effect for want of the backing that might have come from material development. On the other hand, the social ferment of the new developing Africa is by no means all the result of direct Western influences. Gold Coast cocoa is the unique example of a great industry fostered by the almost unaided efforts of Africans themselves, but the results unhappily have been social disturbance different in origin but hardly in kind or degree from that caused by Western capital.

Sierra Leone is in fact the almost perfect example of a phenomenon to which I have called attention elsewhere. Missionaries, who to this day carry much the larger share of the burden of education in Africa, are not infrequently blamed for the unpractical, bookish quality of their teaching, and especially because so many of those trained in their

schools appear to be badly 'adjusted', or fail to fit into their own African society. The truth is that, though slow and hampered, the pace of educational advance, as in Sierra Leone, has far outstripped that in the economic field which was more peculiarly the sphere of Governments; so that in spite of the clamant need for their services the openings for educated men have been deplorably few. Thus the handful of repatriated slaves, planted by philanthropic effort nearly 150 years ago on the small and not very fruitful peninsula behind Freetown, have made much progress in what may truly be called civilization, but it is not all their fault that their creative ambitions have been restricted. The philanthropists who very honourably strove to give them a new start in life never commanded the resources needed to build a new social order. Even if they realized the immensity of the task, which is doubtful, they drew back from it once the enthusiasm of the age of emancipation had cooled, and left all to their protégés.

These 'Creoles', as they came to be called, are to be counted only in tens of thousands—though the difficulty of defining a 'Creole' makes any statistics impossible. It is at any rate a testimony to their quality that they undoubtedly give the whole of Sierra Leone its character, and set its problems. The Creole country, the 'Colony' proper, is, apart from a settlement round Bonthe on Sherboro Island, 80 miles away, a mere 170 square miles, most of it bush-covered mountain, which has long since been denuded of its original forest. In appearance the peninsula is remarkably like a West Indian island, the soil, however, being much poorer, if only because indifferent agriculture has exposed the surface to severe erosion by the abnormally heavy rainfall of nearly 200 inches. Communications even yet are primitive. The Colony is connected by rail, and not yet by road, with the Protectorate, where mineral or any other development is very recent, and even a road completing the circuit of the colony itself is only now in course of construction. The original settlers, therefore, cut off from the very backward Protectorate, as well as alien to its people in manners and

outlook, were thrown entirely on their own resources and those of their peninsula. They made what they could by peasant farming, fishing, and what little trading their geographical position favoured. How hard they tried is still witnessed to by the decent frame houses, and the dim street lamps, pathetic but eminently respectable, of the numerous villages scattered round the peninsula. The names of these villages frequently date from the age of beginnings whose hopes were imperfectly realized—Regent and Charlotte, York and Kent, Wellington and Waterloo, a string of Colonial Secretaries from Bathurst, Murray, and Goderich to Aberdeen, inevitably Wilberforce. From such of these hamlets as are not mere suburbs of the capital a stream of products filters to Freetown market—fish, prepared farina, fruit, and vegetables—also the greater part of the adult able-bodied population in search of opportunities only the capital could offer. Their one asset is in truth the entrepôt trade of Freetown, a not inconsiderable seaport with perhaps the best natural harbour on this coast. Freetown, however, presents the familiar features of any seaport with such an imperfectly developed hinterland—a shifting and shiftless population who are often the victims of poor wages, unemployment, shums, and rack-renting. The social structure of the colony, as well as its physical appearance, is singularly like that lately made only too familiar by the troubles of the West Indian islands.

To equip the resettled Creoles for battle with the natural difficulties of Africa their philanthropist patrons furnished them relatively liberally with schools. What is more, they successfully made it a habit as well as an ambition to use them. It is a mark of their distinctive 'culture' that the Creoles are ardent professors of the Evangelical Christianity of their emancipators and teachers, of whom the chief were the Church Missionary Society and the Methodists. Whatever its present difficulties or shortcomings, the small Creole community of Sierra Leone has long been far ahead educationally of any tribal or other native group in the whole of Africa. Many years before Fort Hare College in South Africa, Fourah Bay College, alone in the con-

continent, was preparing Africans for the ordinary degrees of a recognized university—that of Durham, to which it is still affiliated. The criticism (for those who care to press it) may be that the curriculum was old-fashioned, classical and theological rather than scientific or practical. The Creoles, at any rate, like the 'better-class' West Indians, are people with civilized standards. They are supported, moreover, in a feeling of superiority by the consciousness that, unlike the West Indians, they include no such traditionally dependent class as the great West Indian majority of plantation labourers—with the unfortunate consequence perhaps that they keep themselves aloof from the 'bush natives' who form a large and increasing part of the working population of Freetown. This aloofness is made a charge against them—even by officials who might find the co-operation of Creole and 'native' critics embarrassing. Their attitude is no more than a reflection of the fact that in the tribal peasant setting of Sierra Leone as a whole the Creoles are to all intents and purposes a 'middle' class, with essentially middle-class occupations, interests, and outlook.

Another conventional charge is that their great ambition is for the black-coated callings, especially clerkships. The truth is that, lacking any outlet for enterprise in their own undeveloped hinterland, they have in fact been very useful and serviceable as preachers, teachers, and clerks, not only in Freetown but in other less educationally forward neighbouring colonies. Their homing instinct being strong, appreciable numbers of Creoles have retired to live comfortably in the villages of the colony on pensions earned in the Gold Coast or Nigeria. Not only so, but—as far afield as the Belgian Congo in pre-1914 days—'Sierra Leonians', *videlicet* Creoles, were in actual demand as clerks and as artisans, and generally in a variety of positions of minor responsibility for which uneducated 'natives' were unsuitable. There still are small but distinctive Creole settlements of such men, 'holding their heads high', in many towns all along the Coast. No other section of African society has produced so many individuals who have proved the latent possibilities of Africans.

In modern circumstances the Creoles in their turn have now become a 'problem'. There is more to it than the obvious explanation that the slow but steady spread of education makes the help of Creoles as clerks or otherwise less necessary than of old in other colonies. New nationalisms are wont to close open doors even in Africa. It is at least an added difficulty that the set of British policy is towards Indirect Rule, whose tribal basis leaves less room than there ought to be for the educated members of the tribes themselves—and none for outsiders like the Creoles. The fading of Victorian Liberalism means eclipse also for a class which is one of its small but distinctive products. Elements among the Creoles are, however, not quite powerless to express their displeasure, and even their old-time loyalty suffers a strain. It is a new phenomenon that Freetown for a year or more has been greatly stirred by the activities of a so-called Youth League. Night after night the Wilberforce Hall has been crowded to the doors and windows by those assembled to consider and foment grievances, and though the subjects of protests and demonstrations have by no means always been well chosen or well founded, the ventilation of constitutional or labour grievances has begun to bridge the old deep cleavage between the Creoles and the peoples of the Protectorate. Creole leaders, in short, not uninfluenced by the 'ideologies' of the new age, are coming into their own as the natural leaders of discontent wherever it may happen to show itself.

In Sierra Leone as a whole there clearly are reasons for discontent. With momentary interludes the price of palm-oil and palm-kernels, the only important exports, has suffered from world depression. During the worst of the depression the new mining enterprise certainly relieved the strain on the revenues, but it at the same time raised imperfectly realized hopes of better things, attracting far more in search of paid employment than could be effectively and profitably absorbed even at Marampa and Pepel, the iron-mining centres. Latterly an even larger drift has developed to Freetown itself, where the exigencies of Imperial Defence have given cause for such lavish ex-

penditure, and the concentration of such a European staff, as were never in all our tenure made available for the economic development either of the Colony itself or of the Protectorate. Even so competition keeps wages very low, the revenues of Freetown are insufficient to provide the necessary housing and social services for a serious influx of population—many of them unemployed—and the resource of the Government itself has been severely taxed by the complications of the new situation.

There is in these circumstances more than a tendency to make too much of an alleged clash of interests, and to set the 'Colony' and Protectorate against each other. It is a fact that the houses of the Colony outside Freetown pay only 5s. in tax, those of the Protectorate 9s., of which the extra 4s. is secured to 'N.A.s' for local purposes. In Freetown householders do not pay tax but municipal rates, whose incidence would be difficult to compare with that of the Protectorate house-tax, but the yield is insufficient to cover the cost of administering Freetown, and any additional outlay is a burden on general, which is to say, for the greater part, Protectorate revenues. It is further alleged against the literate and highly vocal Creoles, no doubt with some justice, that being directly represented in Legislative Council, and in any case advantageously concentrated in the capital, their political power greatly outweighs that of the vast backward majority in the Protectorate, giving them a privileged call on these revenues. Those who emphasize some inequity here would agree that the expense of maintaining a large tropical city as a clean and healthy capital is rightly to be shared by all, for the benefit of the country as a whole. But insufficient allowance is made in some oversimple casting of accounts for the indefinitely large proportion of Protectorate people who add immeasurably to the complications and expense of the Creole metropolis.

The problems of Sierra Leone are certainly not to be solved in either Colony or Protectorate separately, but a first step might profitably be a very thorough survey, to clear up the facts about the certainly highly peculiar social conditions in Freetown itself and in the Colony. A good

deal needs to be known to understand better the problems affecting the Creole population—even an approximate idea of their numbers, their occupations, their external interests or sources of income, also the extent to which they are mixing or blending with those same Protectorate peoples they are said to pity as ‘the aborigines’. There are more definitely measurable facts which have never yet been measured. The position is at least obscure, and possibly chaotic, with regard to land rights and land ownership in the Colony districts, if not in Freetown itself. It is said that in Freetown valuable business sites or buildings are still owned by Creoles but let to Syrian or other traders, by whom the owners are apparently being supplanted; and it is said also that, though such property is normally mortgaged, outright sales are few. There is no doubt that a great deal of this down-town property is shabby-looking and in disrepair. There is no doubt either that property-owners whoever they are, Creoles and not necessarily all of them Creoles, are slum landlords—with what return it is impossible to tell. There have been creditable but incomplete attempts at housing reform—providing apparently rather for the ‘better’ classes. But the numbers of Protectorate immigrants, where they find lodgings, and what they pay, should be investigated. On the face of it, facts about over-crowding in this warm climate, where air would seem very particularly desirable, might prove startling. It is true that in one respect appearances are deceptive; by day the streets and markets are crowded with visitors who come and go in heavily laden sailing-boats from the Bulam shore. But even so, not only are certain ‘tribal’ quarters of the town quite obviously crowded with work-seekers from the undeveloped Protectorate, but most of the ‘Creole’ suburbs and many of the outlying villages have an annexe of ‘bush’ huts. There being more than the activities of a fair-sized port can absorb, an overflow finds wretchedly paid employment from market-gardeners and the like, and still there is always a surplus. More is likely to be heard soon about low wages and unemployment—there have been serious strikes in Freetown during the early months of this

year, and one more recently at Marampa which was sustained for three weeks. It is by no means only or chiefly due to the Creoles that the complexities of Freetown are too heavy for the revenue from rates, a tax on the capacity of the municipal council, and a sore embarrassment to the Government itself.

On the narrower question of Freetown government, having in the first place acquired more light on these relevant but inadequately known factors in the situation, the authorities might, it seems to me, very usefully employ a first-rate municipal health officer for a further survey—in conversation a Government Officer particularly suggested the desirability of drawing on the experience of some of the greater Eastern tropical cities. The duty of such an officer would be to prepare a four- or five-year 'plan', a scheme of the capital works needed to put this complex port and capital city on a sounder basis. As things are the ratepayers are said to obstruct any 'reasonable' increase in the rates, but this is not unnatural so long as it is hard to see any reasonable limit to the expenditure likely to be required to make up arrears. It would be easier, and fairer, having first set things right, to demand that the rates be adjusted to the point necessary to *maintain* what was once established.

But in the end the Colony is in no proper sense a unit. Sierra Leone is at least not so absurdly placed as its neighbour, the Gambia, which is cut off by international boundaries from its natural hinterland—throughout West Africa international measures for the freeing of local trade are much to be desired. The only hope of any relief to the Creoles from the development of agricultural resources is in a small but relatively not inconsiderable area of marsh land at the point where Colony and Protectorate meet. Thanks to the new technique of modern agriculture this has important possibilities for rice, the staple food of the country. The present domestic supply is still short or uncertain, and when local demand is overtaken there are export markets in neighbouring colonies where soil is less suitable for rice-growing. If the Creoles are to make the most of

this area it is important that they should learn to use plantation methods—which would seem to offer an opportunity for a large-scale experiment on a co-operative basis. Over and above any palliatives, it must be said also that some debt is still due from us to the Creole people whom we only partly launched a century ago. But the ultimate hope for Sierra Leone as a whole is such development of the backward Protectorate as will secure the well-being at once of its own people and those of the Creole capital, their natural port and outlet to the greater world.

(c) *The Gold Coast Cocoa Industry.* It is one of the little recognized features of that most momentous purely African achievement that its roots are deeply laid in the past. The activities of petty local traders are the most striking outward feature of native life on all this coast. The real total content of this trade is often so small that in spite of it Sierra Leone and other parts have languished, but that of the Hausas at least is widespread and long established. The outward signs of mercantile activity among the Yorubas about Lagos and Abeokuta are also obvious. But it may be by the very success of the cocoa industry they helped to build that the significance of a whole series of coast-belt towns on the Gold Coast has become obscured. A few of these, Accra, Cape Coast, Sekondi, Axim, are well-established centres of European trade where the old has merged in the new and origins are forgotten. But others survive which show more clearly the nature and possibilities of a largely internal exchange of commodities—Adda, for example, at the mouth of the Volta; Akuse, a natural depot higher up the river; Dodowa, now rather decayed, another market centre and depot—whence incidentally barrels of palm oil seem once to have been *rolled* gently eight miles or more to the beach at Pram Pram. Keta, near Adda, may perhaps serve as a type, in spite of the unusual circumstance that this apparently rather remote and inaccessible town is even yet a weaving centre producing what is widely known as Keta cloth.

Geographically Keta had some natural advantages. In

spite of a low rainfall which limits the possibilities of agriculture the soil is favourable for coco-nuts (a peculiarly useful crop) and reasonably good for maize: the dry belt also supports cattle, which cannot be kept in the near interior, besides sheep, pigs, and poultry: fishing is a traditional industry and a lagoon yields abundant salt which is much in demand in parts far distant yet readily accessible by the great highway of the Volta. Keta and some other towns of the coastal plain clearly have a larger population than subsistence agriculture alone would support. The explanation of the relatively dense population is obviously this trade with the interior, which is quite distinct from European import and export trade, and originally no doubt was in salt, fish, and copra. Successful trade in time produces expert traders. All along this unhealthy coast the old European trade always depended on the services of African intermediaries, 'trade boys', whose depreciatory title is misleading. There may well have been a gift for and knowledge of trade even before the Europeans came, but these towns have in any case long held a nucleus of comparatively well-to-do middle-class merchants, besides those ministering to the special needs of this class, including goldsmiths, and occasionally, as at Keta, weavers and dyers. To understand the complexities of the modern cocoa industry it is essential to realize that the Gold Coast has long had an unusually large and active class of this kind, with a tradition of enterprise, and some proved capacity for it, besides even some small reserve of accumulated capital. It is significant that, though the great prosperity arising from cocoa has left Keta rather out of the main stream, the people of Keta have shown originality and adaptability by turning their energy to supplying Accra not only with cattle but with specially reared pigs, sheep, and poultry.

More immediately, the vast enterprise of turning the peasant population of the near interior from subsistence crops to the cultivation of cocoa, a tree which takes possibly seven years to yield any profit, must have been impossible without enterprising leaders. The tradition is

established that in 1879 a Fanti labourer smuggled the first pod home to Mampong from Fernando Po. Export developed gradually after 1891 and even before 1914 the total was appreciable. By 1925 it was 40 per cent. of the world output, and in 1936 a similar proportion represented some 304,800 metric tons. How, then, was this immense activity brought about? Till our own day the cocoa districts were very difficult for white men, and there is no question of the result being due to European enterprise. Though the Government helped to distribute cocoa seed or plants, and as far back as 1889 planted an agricultural station on the not very favourably situated ridge at Aburi, there is no evidence that in those early days the Agricultural Department was a great moving force. Local tradition makes it likely that the influence or example of some of the Basel missionaries may have been helpful. That old centre of missionary educational activity which includes the chain of towns along the Akwapim ridge was the first, though by no means the most favourable, cocoa country. But clearly the decisive factor was the driving energy of this African class which had the wit to see in cocoa-production a new and promising source of wealth and profit. From the very beginning the backbone of the Gold Coast cocoa industry has been, not the simple tribal peasant, but in the real sense a 'middle' class, of traders and entrepreneurs. The dominant even if absentee owners of cocoa-farms are still men from the coastal towns. The ups and downs of world prices, therefore, more particularly the 'downs' of the depression years, and also the suspicion that European traders were rigging the market in their own interests, have had disturbing reactions because they affect, not even chiefly ignorant peasants, but a reasonably intelligent and not inexperienced body of African traders.

The troubles of the industry in the last year should finally have shaken the old assumption that the typical cocoa-farmer is the simple tribesman tilling his share of the tribe's immemorial land. But the most immediate need now is some straightforward *description*. The most elementary facts are still unknown and undiscoverable. It

is said, for example, that the number of individual producers may be in the neighbourhood of 300,000. Any such figure is a worthless guess and no one, perhaps least of all any Government official, has any precise knowledge of how the total, whatever it may be, is made up—what proportion, for example, really are still peasant cultivators on some part of their original tribal holdings, how many are individual owners (and it may be absentee and multiple landlords), who and how many are tenants, and whose tenants. It is only very lately that the Government has made public its awareness of an immense volume of wage labour employed on cocoa-farms, and the new Labour Department has done little more yet than begin to consider a policy to secure the interests and welfare of this untold mass. Even the Cocoa Commission paints the situation only in general terms:

‘Land in the favoured districts has been in great demand. “Strangers”, whether tribesmen from other districts or more or less de-tribalised people from the towns, have been willing to pay large sums for land on which to establish farms. The custodians of tribal, Stool and family lands, which no doubt, on a limited view, seemed inexhaustible, have welcomed the opportunity of easy money. With a complete ignorance of mensuration, and with no more than an oral indication of boundaries based on impermanent marks, land has been allotted to all comers who had money to offer. Cases are not infrequent of the same land, or parts of it, being sold twice over, and land titles are a most fruitful source of highly expensive litigation. The position of these immigrants in relation to tribal discipline is a subject which is still under dispute; the firmness of the footing they have established on the land seems not to be open to question.”

Neither people nor Government can know how to act till the facts are understandably presented. Certainly Gold Coast public opinion is so strong that nothing helpful can be done against it. That public is at present vaguely but not unjustifiably proud of the industry as its own achievement, and even if it is not now wholly satisfied, it must be convinced of the need before it will accept reorganization and co-operate to secure it. How far more anthropological

² Cmd. 5845, *Report of the Commission on the Marketing of West African Cocoa*, § 58, p. 19.

knowledge of native custom will help I am incompetent to judge. The stress on anthropological study no doubt corrects an omission of the past, but its professors have not so far fixed on the social chaos of tribes in the Gold Coast Colony as a favourable field for their studies. Speaking with deliberation in my right as one trained in another school, I would insist that the straightforward description most required to convince and guide the people in their present emergency calls essentially for other qualifications. The immense complexities of the situation in the Gold Coast will, I think, best be understood by an economic historian with some thorough and sympathetic familiarity with the conditions and circumstances of our own ancestors' emergence from the open-field village system of the Middle Ages.

The elements in the problem are physical as well as human, since it matters enormously that the favourable cocoa country is by nature high tropical forest, accessible only by native tracks. The typical 'farm' boundary may perhaps be a fence, but is more usually marked only by some tree, or trees, known only to the neighbours, and quite possibly matter of dispute between them. Till the comparatively recent development of motor transport all fetching and carrying was by human portage, since no draught animal will thrive in the forest. Miss Kingsley remarked years ago that wide roads letting in the sun only made portage more arduous than it is on forest paths. Even yet motor roads and railways do not by any means eliminate human transport from farm to road: and at the last stage a good deal of Gold Coast cocoa still suffers damage in the surf of Accra, though at great cost a harbour has been provided at Takoradi which takes a fraction of the crop.

The inaccessibility of the average farm has considerably complicated the already formidable task of picking, fermenting, carrying, selling, and exporting what is now an annual crop of 300,000 tons. The preparation for market is fortunately a relatively simple process, but it is partly at least because of the difficulty of carrying supervision and

instruction to these scattered 'bush' farms that Accra cocoa fetches on the whole a lower price than the plantation product of Trinidad. The whole crop, moreover, is acquired for export by European firms whose agents could not deal direct with this untold host of producers. Had there been no such ready-made body of 'middle-class' Africans as we have postulated, the necessities of the situation—to say nothing of the chances of gain offered by the handling of a crop worth annually perhaps eight million pounds—must before long have called it into being. The marketing of the crop has at any rate become the affair of another host of Africans, brokers and sub-brokers, an unknown proportion of whom have farms themselves, or a share or 'interest' in farms, if it were only the hold of the creditor over the agriculturist debtor.

It is in this commercial context that the human factor gives some reason for concern. The morality of business is not in the best and highest tradition on this Coast, where the earliest and longest 'contact' was with slave-traders. It is certain that the hardened and possibly hard-living 'Coaster' must always have set himself to win the respect and confidence of his African customers, but the white trader, even if he made the interest of the Coast his own, was only rarely anything but the agent of men at Home to whom the development of the Coast and its people was an incident in business and a hope of profit. With but a poor European model before them it was not to be expected that African practitioners would of themselves set or attain a high standard of business morality. African adventurers, even if they had some rudiments of education, had no religion of self-sacrifice to restrain them. Only a few are professing Christians, and few if any in the cocoa districts have Islam to give them, as Dr. Meek has shown it does, some binding faith to correct and qualify selfish individualism by making them members of a community. Left to himself and by himself the African has indeed a strong sense of clanship, but outside his own personal group, and in relation to all outside it, he is wholly materialist. By all the evidence the native African preoccupation with gain

is more unqualified than any would dare to show openly in the 'acquisitive' society of the West. This being so, much more is needed than an 'adaptation' of African custom to new needs, and it does not help understanding to pronounce that we have to deal here with the problem of a people in transition—even in violent transition—from semi-nomadic subsistence agriculture to an economy based on money.

It is possible now to give only scattered indications of that still almost uncontrolled development which has transformed the Gold Coast cocoa districts till only the outward semblance remains of the simpler African tribal order from which it all began. There is at any rate no reason to doubt the finding of the Cocoa Commission¹ that the peasant cultivator class, those who with only their own families to help them grow their food and tend one or two acres of cocoa, is now no more than 'a small minority of farms and those of the smallest size'. It is certain that 'the employment of labour has become a regular feature of cocoa growing'—this in itself constituting a revolution; and since the Commission vouch for one 'farmer' who 'had in his possession no less than 79 widely scattered farms', it is a fair conclusion that 'in actual fact very many farmers neither grow nor market their cocoa'.

Production in the cocoa industry is to-day governed largely by a traditional practice which is further evidence that even the older Gold Coast included many more than simple self-contained tribesmen. The so-called *abusa* system of working on 'third' shares is nothing less than an original West African form of *métayage*. It seems accepted that there had long been exceptions to the rule of 'communal' land-ownership. The British Government and courts would normally regard the land of the Gold Coast as vested in the local 'Stools', but in native practice portions are undoubtedly looked upon as the preserve of particular influential families. Probably members of these families, as well as chiefs, had long been in the habit of taking lesser people as shares tenants. So the private individual 'owner' of cocoa land may himself be content with a third share of

¹ Cmd. 5845, § 59.

the produce, vesting the management in some relative who, says the Cocoa Commission, 'as tenant or bailiff . . . hires the necessary labourers', sharing with these the remaining two-thirds. More particularly the land-owning Stool itself applies this method on behalf of 'strangers' wanting an interest in cocoa—and in the management of what was virtually 'public' land the public interest has certainly suffered. Evidence given me by the Commissioner of a cocoa district suggests that there are more to share the profits from Stool land than the three noted by the Cocoa Commission, viz. the landowner, the farmer, and the labourers. As my friend put it, there may be claims from the landowner's rent-collector, and possibly also from a Paramount Chief behind the local Stool. In such cases, where the produce of a farm = x , the working tenant, having paid $\frac{1}{3}x$ to his labourers, and $\frac{1}{3}$ of the remainder to the owner, is left with $\frac{x}{3} \times \frac{2}{3} \times 2$, out of which he has to pay his landlord, the Stool. On the other hand, by the time the Stool collector has been satisfied, and the Paramount Chief—and there may very well be the Paramount's collector as well—the public landowner is left with a share not greater than

$$\frac{1}{3} \left(\frac{2}{3} \times \frac{2}{3} \times \frac{2}{3} \right) x.$$

This fraction represents a little less than 10 per cent. of the yield, which is certainly not in itself an extortionate rent for land which is or was the national heritage.

It is, however, by no means certain that even this 10 per cent. reaches the 'national' coffers. The arithmetic involved (there is and can be little or no book-keeping) is such as to allow a good deal of leakage, not to say 'rake-off', before the crop has been gathered, cured, and marketed, and the proceeds returned. The actual return to the Stool only the Stool members know, or some of them: certainly the tribal public does not—nor has any one any accurate idea of how much land is *abused*. It is certain that, in a number of instances in which controlled Stool treasuries are now being instituted, even the Stool authorities, and the

Government officers helping them, are having the utmost difficulty in recovering these Stool revenues from the fingers to which they have been sticking. Owing to the wholesale alienation of tribal or Stool lands in this most imperfectly controlled fashion, there are Stools in good cocoa-growing areas in which the effective Stool revenue has been reduced to nearly nothing.

The effects on social life are immeasurable. Dr. Meek has called attention to some evident neglect of food crops. In parts this may be inevitable, as where, obviously, cocoa has made inroads on the acreage available as a cultivable reserve. But the stocks of imported foodstuffs and trade goods on the stalls in village markets, though they may be evidence of some improvidence, testify also to a marked and very desirable rise in the standard of living. The Commission points out that the 'hold-up' of cocoa in 1938, which was accompanied by a boycott of imports, persisted for six months 'without visible strain', justly drawing the inference that 'the foundation of the natives' independence had not been seriously affected'. The outstanding characteristic of the cocoa areas is in truth their relative wealth, and perhaps the really devastating social effects arise from the pursuit of this wealth unchecked except by courts and Stools whose experience and traditions offer no guidance, and whose members are themselves financially interested.

Without any attempt even to adapt the custom or processes of these courts to the formidable social complexities inevitably arising from the revolutionary economic changes due to cocoa, Government intervention has taken the form chiefly of legal pronouncements on cases that reached the Supreme Court on appeal. There is no doubt that contrary to all African tribal custom parcels of land are freely bought and sold. But there has, almost of course, been no survey of what is now the quite intensively developed land in the cocoa districts, and not so much as a clear delimitation of the areas of tribal jurisdiction in parts where disputes were likely to arise. The Supreme Court, however, had laid it down categorically in 1893 that 'in the interior all that passes is the "usufruct" of land'. In the years following it not

infrequently gave rulings in disputes between the grantor of land, normally the chief as representative of the owning Stool, and the grantee; but though grants inevitably brought under permanent cocoa much of the 'waste', hitherto available as a reserve for 'shifting' cultivation, the courts did not always consider the rights of occupants, who might become, in effect, the *granted*! When therefore, in course of time, well-established and valuable cocoa-trees had given rise, in spite of the edict of 1893, to effective claims of land-ownership, the Supreme Court could only as it were throw up its hands and pronounce at last in 1918: 'all the courts can do, and what they should do, *is to accept accomplished facts*'! It is not to be wondered at, nor is it all the fault of the Africans, that the facts of the situation are now highly confused.

In country districts particularly, 'owners' are never safe against family claims, transfer is troublesome, and land disputes swell the volume of costly litigation. But wealth has also sought scope for investment in the towns, and a favourite outlet has been house-building, which has given rise to a vigorous demand for privately owned building-sites. Members of the well-to-do middle class have now established themselves as villa dwellers in the well-built modern houses which are a feature not only of Adabraka, a very modern African suburb of Accra, but of the largely residential towns of the Akwapim ridge, from Aburi through Mampong to Late and Akropong. Even in the towns, however, title is as a rule unsurveyed, irregular, and insecure. 'Freehold' may mean little more than that foreclosure of a mortgage has left the creditor in full possession—possibly as the result of a series of 'forced sales'. The courts and the Government between them have made no progress in establishing clear and undisputed individual ownership.

It is a consequence of this insecurity that so-called 'titles' are unacceptable as security for agricultural or any other credit. The great increase of wealth, therefore, has been matched by an inordinate and unmeasured development of usury. Since debt is a serious factor in the social life even

of untouched native communities, it was inevitable that the expenses of litigation arising out of land disputes, the pledging of crops against cash advances, besides deals in the highly speculative cocoa market, should give rise to indescribable complications of the problem in the Gold Coast. It appears, for example, that the debtor will not infrequently commute his debt on the *abusa* principle by surrendering one-third, or even two-thirds, of his leased land—land of which the value has been enhanced by the trees of his growing. It is thus that many are left in the end with full 'ownership' of the fragment remaining.

This commutation of debt by *abusa*, since it leaves the lessor in absolute possession of land, is the direct cause of much Stool land passing out of Stool control. It has therefore been of special importance also in adding to the political complications of the Gold Coast. Cocoa land was naturally in great demand by 'strangers', and Stools for their part were very ready to deal in land with any one willing to pay for it, whether by *abusa* or in cash. This has led to the wholesale penetration of the cocoa areas by 'alien' natives. The Akim country, in particular, has not only scattered aliens as individual owners but whole village communities of 'alien' occupants. In many market towns, of which Suhum is an often quoted type, the aliens are definitely in a majority: land for public purposes (if it were only for latrines¹) is obtainable only by paying ransom to private owners, most of them alien. Rumour speaks also of 'squatters', and yet the only local tribunals are those of the home tribe, with appeal to the local tribal Paramount. The worst feature of all is that anything up to 20 per cent. of the population of such towns are Northern Territories labourers. A few at least of their headmen are almost permanent residents, and may even have title of their own to house-sites in the labouring quarter known as the 'Zongo': others possibly have gardens. But the labourers must look for redress of grievances in the first instance to a tribal court, which is certainly not their own, and may very often be

¹ The Lands Department actually has maps of towns in which the only Government lands are the sites acquired for two or three public latrines.

composed if not of their actual employers then of their employers' friends and relatives. During the cocoa 'hold-up', it is admitted, some labourers were obliged to return to their homes without their wages. In some of the cocoa country, and certainly in the towns, one-tribe courts are therefore an anachronism. It is a fair inference that successful government in the Gold Coast demands a revision by the Colonial Office of its exclusive devotion to a doctrine of Indirect Rule based on tribal institutions. The confusion, finally, as it concerns both land-ownership and these questions of tribal jurisdiction, is constantly spreading to any areas newly brought under cocoa, especially in the Western Province but also in Ashanti and Togoland. Common sense would suggest the urgency of beginning intensive study and attempts at control in some of these parts where the confusion is, as yet, less acute.

The events of 1937-8 and the cocoa 'hold-up' turned apparently only on the marketing of the product, but the Inquiry that followed clearly revealed the conditions of strain under which the Africans' great industry labours. The occasion of the crisis was the organization of a Buyers' Agreement or 'Pool'—to the detriment, it was alleged, of the producers. That the doings of the exporting firms were so closely watched, and so effectively resisted, confirms the thesis that we have to do here with something more than uninstructed peasants. Both the spirit and the organization of the hold-up itself, and the points of attack, showed that the promoters are not such 'children' in matters of commerce as one of their leading opponents suggested. It is true that the exporting firms had some case. Their essential service is to 'carry' throughout the year a crop the bulk of which is produced in from three to six months. The evidence was that the average price they paid for cocoa did not compare unfavourably with ruling world prices. On the other hand, it came out that the same firms have an overwhelming grip on the import trade and would be able to compensate themselves for generosity to the producers by exaction of a higher price from the same body of people as consumers. The Report also, while discounting the

allegation that the buying firms regularly control world prices by their hold on the 60 per cent. of the world crop produced by the Gold Coast and Nigeria, did not exclude the possibility that they may exercise some control at particular *moments* favourable to themselves. At any rate, the Commission advised that 'the Agreement should be finally withdrawn'.

The Report, however, is far from approving things as they are. Throughout it fastens on the abuses and defects ruling in the industry, the poor standard of its agriculture, abuses of advances and credit, and the rendering of false weights. While conceding some achievement, and even some highly creditable improvement in the quality of cocoa-production, the Commission is not certain that quality always secures its due return. The Commission regretfully concluded that agricultural co-operation as practised in the Gold Coast, depending as it does on the costly services of the Agricultural Department, and handling now only from 3 to 6 per cent. of the crop, cannot effectively be applied to the whole. Its own complex if tentative marketing scheme therefore will miss the important backing of those who are unselfishly ardent for co-operative enterprise. The danger is that differences on this issue may divert attention altogether from the main point of the Commission's findings, that at all costs and on every ground the cocoa industry requires organization. It would be flattery even to call it reorganization. From first to last this African industry has been left to find its own feet by the unaided efforts of Africans. It is true that the people of the Gold Coast are, thanks to cocoa—and while the price holds—comparatively well off. It is not so certain that their prosperity can face increasing competition in world markets unless its methods are improved and the marketing made more effective. It is, moreover, certain that the prosperity attained has left the people in thrall to a wholly a-moral spirit, which reflects no credit on their Government and endangers their future.

The fact is that in the achievement of the cocoa industry the Africans have been denied Government help. The mere difficulty of staffing and administering this unhealthy

country brought it about that, long before the modern refinements of Indirect Rule were thought of, British Governments in this relatively old colony made it almost ostentatiously their policy to interfere as little as possible with the natives' management of their own affairs. In the age of *laissez-faire* there went with this policy no systematic devolution of government functions on local authorities; on the contrary, so far as the Government chose to act it did so 'directly', through its own officers, footing the bill always from central funds. The Gold Coast is unique in having no direct tax, with the consequence that the politically minded among its subjects have actually been without an essential element of any training in political responsibility. If in Sierra Leone and many other colonies British colonial Governments have commonly been paralysed into inactivity for lack of funds, the Gold Coast is the curious instance of the opposite reason producing the same result. It is as if the very prosperity brought by cocoa were taken as a reason to 'leave well alone'. The welfare of the Gold Coast now demands that the Government should at last make itself responsible in the name of all the people for ordering the chaos.

V

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION

The Peculiar Case of the Gold Coast Colony

It remains to consider the special problems of government in the Gold Coast Colony,¹ one of those exceptional parts of Africa which may be described as not merely 'in transition' but in the violent travail of a new birth. Consideration is the more imperative because the Colonial Office, contrary to its normally elastic policy, stands committed to a fixed plan for all Africa, the system known as Indirect Rule. This is in effect local government by the native tribal authorities, on the 'advice' and under the careful supervision of a European administrative officer—the 'rules of the game' have become so precise that they seem almost to be 'taught' to our administrator cadets. Theory contemplates the eventual assumption of full responsibility by the local units and the withdrawal of the administrative officers. But none of the territories in which the system is in force is anywhere near reaching that stage, so that it has not been found necessary to consider how the various units are to be co-ordinated, or what form of central government is to represent and enforce the common weal of all.

Yet the Gold Coast, which has never experienced Indirect Rule, has already reached a stage where strong and enlightened central government, in which moreover the people must participate, is essential. The derangement of tribal machinery, and certainly the social upheaval due to native African enterprise in the cocoa industry, are at least comparable, as we have seen, to any disturbance caused elsewhere by the capitalist exploitation of African mineral resources. The freedom long allowed to tribal courts, also, though it gave them no voice in the shaping of Government policy, has together with their economic independence made an unusual proportion of the people political-minded.

¹ The 'Colony' is the area longest under British rule and does not include Ashanti and the Northern Territories.

The broad essentials of Indirect Rule, on the other hand, were originally suggested, it is well known, by the old-established Emirates of Northern Nigeria, which had not only a firmly rooted ruling class but also a binding religious system, and, not least, an established and regular revenue produced by a system of direct taxation unique in Africa. By the originality of Sir Donald Cameron the plan of using any existing authority was adapted and developed to meet the needs of more primitive tribal areas, first in Tanganyika, then in the formless society of south-eastern Nigeria. Success is claimed for Indirect Rule also in the progressive Yoruba states of Southern Nigeria. But in these comparatively well-defined units British administration made a clean start barely a generation ago; whereas in the Gold Coast the economic revolution has gone too far to be readily ordered by a plan of government based strictly on traditional forms—even if the experiment is not altogether precluded by the long habituation of its people to British rule of a different pattern. It is unfortunate, therefore, that the unusual experience of working to a theory had so far gone to the heads of some in authority that many had lately allowed a rule of practice useful especially in backward parts to harden into a doctrine of salvation also for the more advanced. We have Sir Donald Cameron's own authority for the view that there are those, in Northern Nigeria and elsewhere, who would make Indirect Rule 'some rather mysterious business understood only by the initiated'.¹ Moreover, a recent study of the work of the Newfoundland Commission suggests that once the Colonial Office has adopted any such set policy there almost must be a time-lag before this can be reversed, or even modified, in the light of special experience like that of the Gold Coast.

The present Gold Coast system, which stands by itself, bears many marks of the *laissez-faire* age in which it took shape. The Gold Coast Colony was at one point nearly abandoned altogether: from 1821 to 1843 it was in fact made over to the control of a Merchant Company. When

¹ *My Tanganyika Service, and some Nigeria*, by Sir Donald Cameron, G.C.M.G. Allen & Unwin, 1938.

by the so-called Bond, a loosely drawn agreement concluded with the Chiefs in 1844, the Crown resumed direct responsibility, it was with a steady resolve to interfere as little as possible in internal matters. Before the purposive modern doctrine of Indirect Rule was thought of the British Government, which elsewhere allowed native forms to be swept aside, expressly recognized local native institutions; but it was without any attempt to turn the old forms to constructive social work. Any constructive capacity the tribal machinery may have had has, rather, become atrophied by disuse, at the same time that chiefs and their supporters have been driven to assert claims based on an antiquarian constitutionalism. Thus the local government of the colony rests by law on no fewer than sixty-three separate 'States', many of them made up of several 'divisions': and only the ability and enlightenment of a few of the more prominent 'Paramounts' obscures the utter weakness and ineptitude of what may very well be the majority of their colleagues. When, however, it comes to questions of political reform, talk with Gold Coast politicians inevitably comes back in a very few moves to the privileges of the States, for which they claim the dubious constitutional sanction of the 'Bond' of 1844. It is to the credit of all the parties concerned, and always to be remembered, that the government of the Gold Coast rests thus not on conquest but on free agreement. In constitutional practice, however, there is serious inconvenience. In England itself Magna Carta (to which Gold Coast constitutionalists frequently appeal) left unimpaired that unity of the State in the Crown which began perhaps with the Norman Conquest. The Gold Coast 'Bond', on the other hand, by the cover it gives to the claims of individual chiefs and States, has been a wholly disintegrating influence. So lately as 1934 an attempt to introduce direct taxation was stoutly and successfully resisted. Among the not negligible champions of the opposition were those who based their case on the ground that any such innovation would require the express consent of the whole of the chiefs and people, apparently jointly and severally.

The government in its modern form took further shape from the institution in 1876 of a Legislative Council, and the enactment two years later of the first Native Jurisdiction Ordinance. It is characteristic that even at this later date the administrative functions of local government were still neglected—and an incidental result of the importance attached to the jurisdiction of the tribal courts was the encouragement offered to educated Gold Coasters to concentrate on the legal profession, to the neglect of medicine and schoolmastering. Practice in the courts was the one really independent outlet left them. Guided by lawyers the chiefs were led to claim—what the central government was never at pains to challenge—an ‘inherent’ jurisdiction: that is to say, whereas English courts are all in fact and in theory institutions of one Crown, those of the Gold Coast have been set up at discretion by at least sixty-three ‘States’. The wholly disastrous result has been an inordinate multiplication of tribunals. Only the other day I was the guest of a District Commissioner who was himself responsible for the supervision of five different States and no fewer than forty-seven tribunals. Even had he not been just about to lose the help of his one assistant, it was obviously impossible for such an officer to promote Indirect Rule of the newer type—as by helping States with the organization of Stool treasuries (for which there was some demand). He could not hope even to make his control of the tribunals effective.

Supervision of these tribunals is unfortunately a very necessary function of any self-respecting Government. It must be remembered that, in almost feudal fashion, tribunals of this type are a source of revenue, especially valued where there is no direct taxation and where other sources have been dissipated, as by the alienation of Stool lands. Not only do the chiefs stand to profit by the dispensation of ‘justice’, but the members and especially the officers of the courts depend for their own sustenance on litigants’ contributions, which take the form of costs or ‘hearing’ fees, or other charges like those made for serving witnesses with a subpoena. There is, moreover, no public

control and audit of the proceeds, and no safeguard against exorbitant fees and charges. On the contrary, private interests stand in the way of reform and public control. Further, since courts must continue to function, their upkeep on better lines would necessitate an additional burden on the public in the form of highly unpopular direct taxation—whereas reform in Indirect Rule countries has very often been facilitated just because it meant a reduction of the burdens of tribute on the common man.

The complementary side of the picture is the extreme weakness and ineptitude on the administrative side of so-called Native Administrations in the Gold Coast. The original Ordinance of 1878 did indeed authorize the chiefs to issue by-laws on a variety of specific subjects and to enforce these in their courts. It failed, however, to arm itself with power to see that by-laws are not only formally enacted but enforced. In many instances, therefore, the by-laws made by N.A.s have proved to be an actual obstruction, hindering the central government, or preventing it altogether from taking measures of its own even when such were highly necessary for the protection of the country's major industry, cocoa—for example the control of plant pests or the protection of natural forest. 'The native administration is in effect', says Lord Hailey, 'mainly an agency for the maintenance of the Stool government', and again, 'just because it was sought to respect as far as possible the powers which custom gives to the Chief, his authority was necessarily restricted to that field'.¹ In other words, the Stool authorities were not adapted, and are perhaps now inadaptably, as instruments for carrying out such measures of social reconstruction as are pre-eminently the problem to-day.

It remains that while the Government failed to make the Stools an essential part of the administrative machine, it was at some pains to secure the political position of the chiefs as members of the legislature. Politically, therefore, the present system stands entrenched, which might be well if it were certain that the chiefs are in truth representative

¹ *African Survey*, p. 471.

of the people and interests of the country as a whole. In practice their influence is concentrated in three assemblages of chiefs, the Provincial Councils. These bodies are advisory only, but the drafts of ordinances designed for enactment by the Legislative Council are habitually submitted to them, and it can never be easy to ignore the hostile advice of the lesser councils—especially as these also have elective powers and send their representatives (or in effect *delegates*) to voice objections in the central assembly. In historical fact the influence of the chiefs has prevailed to make certain typical modern problems more difficult to solve than they need have been. Between 1894 and 1897 a battle was fought and lost to secure for the State, that is, the people as a whole, the control of 'waste' lands, forests, and mineral rights. By the efforts, above all, of a local body still known as the Gold Coast Aborigines' Protection Society the chiefs won. The control of lands and forests was left to the chiefs, and to the by-laws already described—with an inevitable result. The 'waste' is now much of it private individually owned land paying nothing to the Stools. The forest reserves are wholly inadequate and the well-being of the people's cocoa is endangered. The rents for mining leases, some of them very inadequate, and sometimes a share of the royalties as well, are paid to uncontrolled Stool treasuries. Stool guardians may or may not devote the proceeds to public purposes; notoriously some of them have squandered public funds in litigation.

It is not uncommonly said that the popular influence and standing of the chiefs as a whole was much shaken especially by the failure of so many of them to keep control of Stool lands.¹ To-day this is not so certain. It seemed to be the general opinion that under skilful leadership the chiefs gained considerably in prestige by the way they handled, and ultimately took the lead in, the great cocoa 'hold-up' of 1938. It is certain that in recent years the chiefs in Provincial Council assembled have developed their political technique. Joint meetings of the three Provincial Councils are now quite frequent, at which the chiefs are

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 469.

learning to use their influence collectively, not necessarily on the side of reform or reconstruction. The trend of opinion in England, moreover, makes the task of reform no easier by its emphasis on the necessity of adhering as closely as possible to established native custom. I have heard a leading chief defend the most unsatisfactory state of things almost in the language of schools of thought strongly represented in the Universities of Oxford and London—it was advisable, he considered, to build for the future on established custom, and above all to ‘go slow’!

The question arises how far the chiefs of the Gold Coast are either representative of the people or subject to them—it is notorious that chiefs are de-stooled by their subjects; according to the *African Survey* 109 suffered in the years 1904-26. Are these de-stoolings the result of popular uprisings, and do they in fact indicate effective ‘democratic’ control? A former visit six years ago—when I was perhaps predisposed to accept the theory that here was democracy—left me much puzzled by the curious public indifference to the question of Stool revenues. While many chiefs were obviously poor and unable to carry any burden of administrative duties because their resources were either squandered or inadequate, a few, whose activities were inconsiderable, clearly drew a sizable income from cocoa lands or rents, or from mining sources. In either case the public interest clearly demanded publicity, with public audit and control of income and expenditure. But organized Stool treasuries were rare then, and, more surprising, public interest in or demand for such control is so feeble that even yet the public authority has rarely ventured to step in and enforce it.¹

On my latest trip I seemed to see an explanation, from three contrasted pieces of evidence. The first was the famous case of Asamankese, a prolonged dispute about the division of the very considerable proceeds of mining

¹ Since this was written, the Native Administration Treasuries Ordinance, which received the Royal Assent on 17 April 1939, has at last given the Government power to require that any N.A. *shall* set up an ordered Treasury if so required—or, in default, itself to take the necessary action.

revenues, including the right of the Paramount of the district to a proportion. The case went three times on appeal to the Privy Council, and is supposed to have cost the disputants something in the neighbourhood of £100,000 of tribal public money. Only after long deliberation did the central government pluck up courage to intervene. By a special Ordinance, centrally controlled Stool treasuries were instituted to deal with the revenues of the divisions principally concerned. The wholly salutary and visible result is that two squalid towns, Asamankese itself and Akwatia, the latter almost on the mine-field, are at last receiving some belated and highly necessary social expenditure. For ten years their revenues, which must have been in the neighbourhood of £10,000 a year, had been wholly wasted, and the benefits they now receive are—it seemed reasonable to judge—not unpopular.

The second case concerned a large and important town, which has a solid tribal nucleus but also a considerable mixed population, including relatively well-to-do educated clerks and cocoa-brokers of diverse origins, as well as a large 'Zongo' of Northern Territories labourers. The chief having been de-stooled, the 'electors' for a matter of two years failed to agree on a successor. But in the meantime leaders of the tribe had, with the help and advice of district officers, proceeded with the organization of a Stool treasury on the most approved Indirect Rule model. African clerks, regularly salaried officers, were with apparent interest and enthusiasm making annual estimates and working to them, applying the not inconsiderable Stool revenues to public works for the benefit of the town as a whole, besides doing their best to improve collection of the revenues by finding and closing leakages. It is true, and a defect, that this useful work by a tribal treasury found no place for the services of citizens who were not of the local tribe. But at least all this was going on very successfully, some would say the more successfully, without the intervention of a chief. It is also significant that, though in such an interregnum power or influence normally passes to the steward or treasurer, a tribal officer known as

the Jasehene, in this instance, with finances under such good control, the following of the Jasehene is said to have melted away.

My third example was a small and obscure township deep in the country. Driving several times through this village I had my attention called to the obvious fact that it was more than half deserted. The explanation offered was that here was yet another scene of de-stoolment on which there had followed a disputed election. Whereupon the 'democracy', knowing by bitter experience that disputes lead to litigation, and the expenses of litigation to the exaction of a tribal levy, had as far as possible removed themselves bodily. It was, however, by no means certain that this precaution would give them immunity from the exactions of the tribal tax-gatherer.

It may be a just claim in the light even of these examples that the constitutional checks on the exercise of arbitrary authority by Gold Coast chiefs are unusually well developed, and that few African tribes elsewhere have more obvious foundations on which to build effective democracy. But the boast is not warranted that 'the people' now control either the chiefs or the privileged classes. Taking a line through these three instances, and applying perhaps some *a priori* knowledge of the strength of class in Gold Coast life, it is a fair conclusion that the revenues are as a rule a large part of the issue in cases of de-stoolment. The disputes are often affairs of rival family factions contending, on their own behalf rather than that of 'the people', for the control of the chieftainship, and of the funds the chief may hope to manage and disburse. Even nearer home the ideal of public service is a very tender modern growth. Eighteenth-century England took it for granted, as do many countries to-day, that an office is not so much an opportunity of service as a 'place of profit': and so it clearly and quite naturally is in the Gold Coast Stools.

The impression left by Gold Coast 'politics', and the general attitude to the clamant national and social issues we considered in the last lecture, are evidence supporting this conclusion. Health and other social services have

made little more progress in the Gold Coast than in many poorer colonies which have straitened revenues as an excuse. General elementary education is backward, especially for girls, though here at least there is no reason to doubt the existence of a popular demand. The clean-up of squalid and depressing towns in rural districts, and of parts even of Accra, has been steadily obstructed by African vested interests. In specific cases the cost of providing necessary public buildings is heightened, and the very possibility of still more essential slum-clearances impeded, by private owners' insistence on their property rights. I have in mind at least one very mixed cocoa town, as well as a crowded mining village, where private owners of house property have become typical slum landlords.¹ The housing of the immigrant Northern Territories labourers in the 'Zongos' is disgraceful. It is true that the demand for labour is probably vigorous enough to secure these labourers against exploitation in the matter of wages, especially as they have some organization, and possibly remedies, of their own. At least on the farms they have, for example, the imperfectly controlled handling of the cocoa crop, and can make certain of getting their due share. But it is an intolerable situation that, in case they have their wages withheld or suffer other grievances, their appeal lies in the first and second instances to those divisional and 'State' tribunals whose officers' emoluments depend on unspecified fees, exacted in this case from litigants of an alien tribe with no voice in the local councils. There are in addition whole village communities of alien tribesmen, other than Northern Territories labourers, already subject to tribal courts which are not their own.

In face of all this it seemed astonishing to a sympathetic outsider that, so far as the interest of public men ranged at all beyond the burning question of the market price of cocoa, the majority were preoccupied with fine points of constitutional law, the seat of sovereignty or the signifi-

¹ This difficulty is not peculiar to the Gold Coast: in Sierra Leone the other day a clearance of slum property gave rise to strong protest by the 'popular' party. See also p. 90 above, and note.

cance of 'the Bond' for the status of chiefs. By an understandable simplification the cocoa 'hold-up' is spoken of by such as an episode in war between 'capital and labour'. But a typical document making this assumption, though it goes on to protest against taxes on 'the poor man's gin', contains not a word that would indicate even awareness of any problem touching the status and conditions of the Northern Territories labourers. The social needs of the Gold Coast, it is clear, get little or no attention because 'popular' leaders are thus preoccupied with questions affecting constitutions, if not 'places', and reconstruction will not be easy so long as, at the same time, the British authorities cling to a programme covered by the set formulae of Indirect Rule. At least in the towns and in cocoa districts (and cocoa is general also in Ashanti and part of Togoland), the needs of Gold Coast society have outgrown the capacity of the indigenous tribal machinery.

This is not to say that we are confronted here by the conventional 'problem of detribalization'. Nor, in spite of appearances, and of the callings of many of them, are even Gold Coast leaders 'Westernized'—cocoa is their own achievement, and they have a strong pride in all that is theirs, including traditional tribal forms. So independent are they that if they were 'Westernized' this is not a process that could be checked by outsiders taking thought. But tribal ties, strong and active especially as an emotional factor, are in practice much modified. Many may be 'middle' class and none the less tribal, but nowhere is 'social stratification' so marked. Many of the able and ambitious men in the upper strata have no recognized position in the tribal councils. Their reasonable claims can be met only by conceding them and their fellows a legitimate voice if not an active share in the actual work of governing the country. It is, moreover, a consequence of comings and goings in the cocoa trade that many if not most tribal authorities have to deal with sometimes highly intertribal communities. For the last reason alone something more than the tribal machinery would be needed. Units are

required in which clashing tribal claims and jurisdictions are balanced and harmonized.

The Native Administrations, so called, certainly need drastic reform, and they must be brought under real popular control. As things are, ambitious individuals must be tempted to toady to chiefs, or otherwise to scheme to influence them for selfish ends. 'Correctly' applied, 'Native Administration', as set forth in Sir Donald Cameron's recently published book, is designed 'mainly in the interests of the people and not mainly in the interests of the chiefs'. In this spirit one officer told me lately on the West Coast that his main 'problem' was 'the chief'—another that a large part of his work in introducing 'N.A.' was devoted to 'saving the people from their chiefs'. How far such efforts can hope to be successful may be a question, but they have certainly been forgotten altogether in the past of the Gold Coast. When a chief is given official backing it is essential to secure from him—which may mean to exact—a direct return in the way of responsible work on behalf of his people, and this is as essential with the more wealthy and commercial-minded chiefs of the Gold Coast as with the dignitaries of primitive tribes. It certainly would not do in the Gold Coast to follow an example not unknown elsewhere and 'create' an Authority to be 'run' by the British officials. But Sir Donald has recalled also that the greater part of the *Native Authorities Ordinance*, which laid the foundations of the successful Tanganyika system, consisted of clauses which strengthened the powers of the European District Officer—that is of the central authority—enabling him to take action himself in case the chief failed to fulfil towards his people the duties incumbent upon him as the accredited agent of a civilized government. Nothing less is due from a trustee who devolves any effective part of his responsibilities on a ward still in nonage. National interests must be safeguarded. It is an essentially democratic provision of our own well-established society that the organs of local government are in the last resort subject to control by some representative of the community as a whole, like the Ministry of Health.

The reserve powers of the Tanganyika District Officer should similarly protect the interests of the people against invasion or neglect by the chief. But there is a difference—that the essentially popular authority of the Ministry of Health implies the existence of an integrated whole, the State, which certainly does not exist in Tanganyika Territory, or Nigeria. In the view of its best exponents, 'Indirect Rule' is essentially a plan of local government. It therefore leaves on one side the problem of making the controlling central authority itself representative.

The Gold Coast Native Administrations are now mere tribal courts. But, as Sir Donald Cameron taught me years ago, it is important that the well-established contraction 'N.A.' should stand for *Native Authority*, not merely for *Native Administration*. The Gold Coast is one of those whose rulers—forgetting that, as he put it, no one can administer in a strait waistcoat—have failed in their objective because they have given the Native Authority too little scope. As a result Gold Coast leaders have reached the point of demanding a share in government, and a say in policy, with defective experience of administrative practice and little sense of the disinterested public spirit in which it should be faced. Political life is more than normally a field for the acquisition of individual status, or even wealth. But the Gold Coast Colony differs from the more primitive communities where the success of Indirect Rule has been most striking in being at least much more self-consciously aware of itself. A vocal and not uninstructed body of public opinion will make control by a still unrepresentative central government even more difficult than usual. The truth is that British rule has at least succeeded in bringing it about that the many thinking and aspiring Gold Coasters, no less than Indians and West Indians, do us the honour to take British political institutions as the only acceptable model. Nothing will really satisfy them now but unambiguous evidence that the goal towards which they move is representative parliamentary government.

And in essence the really urgent issues of Gold Coast politics are already national rather than 'local'. The organi-

zation of the cocoa industry cannot be attempted on a tribal basis. The land system is in chaos, not here and there where tribal custom has relaxed, but throughout the cocoa districts; the disorder, moreover, is spreading. Health and education also are in the first place national services. The needs of a dozen or more towns on the coastal belt, and in the cocoa area and some mining areas as well, can only be met by Town Boards of a 'Western' representative type. For these there would be no lack of able educated councillors and town officers. Informally, and extra-legally, some district officers have actually instituted such boards. Yet it would seem that a draft 'Township Ordinance', prepared by the Colonial Government to regularize this practice, has been delayed if not disallowed by the Colonial Office. Locally the objection was taken to be that the Town Boards or other machinery contemplated would not conform to the principles of Indirect Rule. The official reason is, however, that there is in the Gold Coast no system of direct taxation on which to build, and that effective local government cannot function where it is wholly dependent on grants by the central authority. The new Native Treasuries Ordinance (*v. supra*, p. 100, note) only partly meets this difficulty, since it provides for local taxation, but only by existing 'States' or 'N.A.s': whereas the crucial need is in the much mixed non-tribal towns.¹

That there is no direct tax, and the reluctance of the Gold Coast to accept its necessity, are further obstacles in the way of strictly tribal local government of the standard 'indirect' type. Everywhere else Native Administrations depend for the major part of their revenue on the refund of a proportion of the direct taxation, which as a rule they themselves collect. The difficulty is not only political, that Gold Coast leaders make it the first principle of the freedom they enjoy that there should be no taxation—with or without representation. Just because there is far more

¹ It does not appear how this problem of finance will be met in the large mining area of Tarkwa for which, in reply to a question on 15 March 1939, the Secretary of State promised a special Township Ordinance. This measure, when it matures, should help to order some, at least, of the 'mushroom' mining villages discussed above in Lecture III.

taxable wealth than in any other African community, the normal African hut or poll tax would be more than normally unfair. On the face of it the only equitable tax for the Gold Coast would be a full-dress income-tax, such as could be efficiently organized only on a national scale, by a national authority. This more than ever makes it essential that the central authority itself be made, if not fully representative, at least obviously responsive to popular influence.

The *African Survey* is unusually emphatic on the subject of the Gold Coast, Lord Hailey having clearly felt that the present administrative system needs comprehensive reorganization. Since, therefore, the question has come alive, it is necessary to point a warning. There is danger in a prevalent view that the troubles of that complex community are due largely to the failure of those in control to follow the best models. The Gold Coast imbroglio will not be resolved by supplying a Governor versed in and applying more strictly the methods that have served in the simpler societies of Nigeria or Tanganyika. The stock pattern Legislative Council is highly unsatisfactory. The Governor is required to be at once King, Prime Minister, and Speaker, and the effective powers of the council are nugatory against the official majority. Yet it is this old system which must be developed and improved upon. 'Ballot-box' representation which was once taken for granted is now frowned upon, but no alternative has even been suggested. It will not suffice to develop the plan by which the chiefs in Provincial Councils elect delegates to the Central Legislative Council, since there are many whom the chiefs do not satisfactorily represent. Yet means must be found to join the local fragments to the Central Authority, and to one another. Those concerned with working out the theory and practice of Indirect Rule have been so pre-occupied that this essential has not had from them the thought it demands.

It remains none the less that the Gold Coast is perhaps the most hopeful of all African colonies. It is unique in

having at once good natural resources and a relatively large educated population concerned to turn these to the best account. In the Gold Coast, also, initiative, economic and social, instead of resting as usual solely with the Government, is shared by Africans and by European trading firms. It is a somewhat new thing for a Colonial Government to have to deal with active local interests on almost equal terms. It should be stimulating. But Gold Coast Governments, as if merely paralysed, have failed to play their part. By an understandable process the great economic development of the last generation has favoured, as it has also somewhat enlarged, the possessing class, without as yet raising the status of those who are in any proper sense 'the people'. But undoubtedly there is a growing feeling for the national and popular well-being, and it should not be insuperably difficult to win consent and active support for a programme of social reform even from the Legislative Council as at present constituted. Not a little of the blame for what is now amiss must lie at the door of our own administration, less for anything done than for work left undone—if only for the failure to give the Gold Coast such guidance and leadership as it could hardly itself supply in the new circumstances into which it has so suddenly been plunged. It would seem that there is here a rare opportunity for a Governor who, having himself mastered the intricacies of the problem, will win the people's confidence and support. Not the least part of an active policy of reconstruction would be to strengthen the faith of any leaders of the Gold Coast who even now have a more positive concept of freedom than that which makes it consist in the privilege of paying no direct taxation.

Our weakness in the past reflects the deficiencies not so much of individuals at the head as of the whole body of those who have represented the ideals of civilization. Except on the untenable view that West Africa is all the better for the fewness of its teachers, it must be held to be a loss that for health reasons 'tours' have to be short, and that white men on the Coast have been cut off from wives and families and from the normal amenities of existence.

They, and the Africans they should serve, have been at a disadvantage because of this sheer difficulty of living-conditions. Europeans have been too few and weak to count as a garrison, but they have been ineffective in any other way, and some effort is required to enable those there are to give better service.

It is hardly even desirable that Europeans should acquire 'a stake in the country'. But this at least the agricultural settlers in other parts of Africa actually do, very often bringing capital with them to strengthen the resources of the community they join, as some compensation for what they take. Europeans in West Africa, on the contrary, inevitably cause some drain of 'invisible' exports, to pay for leave, or to maintain their families in the home country. It is a further trouble that the trading community, though often maintaining for the time of their service much closer touch with the African people and country than more aloof officials, are as a rule serving distant boards of directors whose only interest in the West Coast of Africa is financial. The Europeans who count, therefore, are principally the officials, but though non-official influence is weak there is acute suspicion among Africans that Governments are failing to exact a full contribution to public funds from companies which deal in or produce goods or minerals which are all sent out of the country. It is very hard in any case to see how a cure is to be found for the artificiality of life in little West Coast capitals, whose European society must do less than justice to the better features of life in the centres of European civilization. This European society is at once limited in its range and highly compartmented. When men are not isolated on bush stations, they tend to fall into cliques—traders, mining men, a handful of soldiers, missionaries, officials senior and junior, administrative, scientific or technical, of higher or lower grades. There is only rarely the feeling of common purpose necessary in those engaged in any high enterprise.

It is a direct consequence that in spite of our professions we still make so little progress in the political education of Africans. The West African colonies have missed some of

the real educational benefits enjoyed by their otherwise less fortunate cousins even in South Africa. I have in mind as an example the instruction resulting to both parties from the so-called Joint Councils of Europeans and Africans. It would seem that Europeans on the Coast must be more inevitably brought into close touch with the African point of view, but there are fewer of them either to learn or to join in making their own special contribution—which is to help the Africans to understand themselves and what is new and peculiar in the problems that affect them. The essence of the Joint Council idea, at its best, is that Africans should not merely state their views, but learn to state them more effectively by having them subjected to friendly but searching criticism. Men with needs or grievances, and Africans have both, will at first exaggerate. As I have sometimes ventured to put it, where a pain is said to be affecting the whole foot, closer examination will often locate the trouble more precisely in one toe. But African political leaders of the well-educated and successful professional class get less exercise than we all need in the art of dialectic, such as comes best from free exchange with our intellectual superiors. Even the more numerous and very important minor 'intellectuals', whose aspirations are reflected by the springing up of 'Literary Societies' in many obscure villages, have few to give them the training they seek—or even to keep them intellectually humble. One group of 'intellectuals' with whom I spent a profitable evening consisted of twenty-four Government clerks or other officials, one or two parsons, and some teachers, not one of whom had enjoyed more than a Standard VII education, supplemented at most by two or three years of specialized teachers' training. Though it is astonishing how well these men may do, it is unreasonable to expect such, all unaided, to judge clearly of the intricate social and economic problems of the Gold Coast, or even to state their views with calm precision. Yet still more clearly it will be impossible to impose solutions on such people from above, without making sure of co-operation, understanding, and support. It may be fatal even to try.

It makes the problem more difficult that virtually no one is in a position, even if any had the ability, to maintain close touch with Europeans and Africans of all classes, and to see the situation whole. Government officers, the most numerous and well informed of the European group, including many of the ablest, are by the nature of their duties, if not by express prohibition, debarred from free and frank comment. There is no West African University, scarcely any organized social or economic research. Mining and commerce are special interests. The missionary statesman is exceptional and West Africa has hardly had its share of such. Detached and independent scientists and teachers could be helpful but are very few, and absorbed, like every one else on the Coast where there can be no leisured class, in their own duties. There is much to be said for a plan, which has been mooted, of establishing a Research Institute which would strengthen the staff and work of Achimota College.

But the conclusion is that from the European side better results must be obtained above all from the administrative staff. Many officers are now overworked and their numbers are so low that juniors especially have their energies and usefulness dissipated by over-frequent transfers. Since salary and leave are already a heavy burden on colonial revenues, relief must be sought less by increasing their number than by relieving them of routine work. Indirect Rule should theoretically lead to greater devolution on Africans, but in practice it appears that the old routine of 'direct' administration continues almost unmodified. In the Gold Coast, for example, administrators are required to deal with gun and other licences, and both they and departmental officers with all cash transactions, even to the extent of driving round their districts to make monthly payments personally to road gangs and casual employees. Lord Hailey has commented on the folly of wasting the time of highly paid and highly educated officers, and paying in effect a 10 per cent. insurance premium to guard against defalcations of perhaps 3 per cent. The direction and supervision of the 'indirect' native administrations, on which hope is

chiefly placed, are in themselves exacting and responsible duties which cannot efficiently be combined with mechanical drudgery of this kind.

The constructive 'advice' which is expected of district officers will also be useless in the void. Some means must be found of bridging what is in effect the great gulf that now separates district officers from all but a few chiefs and their councils. What is needed is more 'contact', not less, and the contact must be especially with the thinking Africans open to new ideas—whereas the thinking and aspiring members of the educated class, whose support is or should be most readily available for reconstruction, are by no means necessarily members of any 'indirect' tribal administration. To meet their need there must in the first place be *working councils on a Western rather than a strictly tribal model*. For the purposes of such councils, and perhaps for all purposes, there would be need also for a reconsideration and a relaxation of the rules that now seal the lips of administrative officers and prevent them speaking with absolute frankness of the plans, not to say the mysteries, of the administration.

There is perhaps one weakness inherent in our able and worthy political service as now constituted. I have never spoken or written but with the utmost sympathy and respect for the work and quality of those who compose this service. Speaking in London University, which contributes fewer men than it ought, I can I hope with propriety suggest that the field from which they are selected ought to be wider to make the service thoroughly representative of the best brains of the trustee nation. My own University of Oxford is a favoured field, but I have other university connexions which, like London, are much neglected. There are grounds for judging that, though the selectors have been ranging more widely, residence at a select group of Public Schools is still deemed a desirable attribute even in graduates from Oxford or Cambridge—in other words that the Service has the weakness as well as the undoubted quality of other 'class' institutions. Even a classical education, the best of foundations, is not

enough, for the weakness is palpable especially when it comes to the handling of key problems of mining and commerce. All sorts of minds are needed to apply themselves to the riddles of Africa, and the present Public School Service needs a yet stronger leaven of men from other classes, which I should say from experience are more generally and variedly adaptable. For the work in hand, which is nothing less than helping to build a new social order, perhaps the greatest need of all is for intellectual independence and detachment. The Service now lacks men who, as I have heard it put, have the power to stand back and criticize their own assumptions.

There is another and perhaps more neglected consideration. The British Empire on its stronger side is very much the product of the age of *laissez-faire*. The nineteenth century won the goodwill of peoples whom we are in danger of alienating, and it did so by teaching and leaving them to enjoy much freedom. The main task of administration then was to maintain peace and justice, a task for which a 'class' service was very well adapted. Since 1918 the Colonies have suffered like the rest from recurrent economic and political crises, additional for them to the normal difficulties of a very early stage of adolescence. However immature the stage, it is clear that the principles of *laissez-faire* no longer suffice. But at the very moment that the Colonies' needs cry out for more constructive thought, the pressure of events at Home leaves fewer than before with inclination or leisure for the study of colonial interests. In older days emigration to what are now the Dominions gave those greater colonies friends in British homes of all classes. To-day knowledge of or even interest in the Crown Colonies, necessarily slight, is as limited in its social range as the field of selection for the Colonial Service. It is a defect needing and capable of remedy that a Conservative audience, just because of its family connexions, is much more likely than any Labour or Liberal meeting to include a few with some real colonial understanding. Only when the 'Colonial' Service is itself truly national can there be any hope of effecting such a change in

the national outlook as our overwhelming national responsibility demands. While retaining the clear ideal of freedom which in the past won the goodwill of the colonial peoples we have need to infuse into democracy there as here more creative purpose.

PART III

By E. R. J. HUSSEY, C.M.G., M.A.

VI

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN ASSISTING THE PEOPLE OF WEST AFRICA TO ADJUST THEM- SELVES TO THE CHANGING CONDITIONS DUE TO EUROPEAN CONTACTS

THIS is the last in a series of lectures dealing with some of the problems arising from the impact of European civilization on West Africa.

That such a subject, which is concerned chiefly with the mental development of West Africans, should be considered appropriate for a course of lectures in the History and Progress of Preventive Medicine and Tropical Hygiene, under the Heath Clark Bequest, is not surprising in view of the close association that exists between mental and bodily health.

All over the world doctors are paying more and more attention to the preventive aspect of medical science and the early treatment of disease, with the result that, wherever there is an adequate public health service, the children are under medical supervision both before and during their time at school.

Under such conditions it is possible for the doctor and the teacher to work in close co-operation, and when cases occur in schools of mental retardation, unhealthy tendencies, and symptoms which suggest lack of mental balance, due very often to some emotional disturbance in early childhood, there is resort to psychological treatment to reduce or harmonize conflicting elements which upset mental balance.

Now in West Africa it may not be the case that children suffer to the same extent as in Europe from the serious results of repressions and the various other causes of mental disorder, but it is quite obvious that the whole mental life of the inhabitants of a West African colony is affected by the difficulty of reconciling the beliefs and thoughts, instincts and impulses, hopes and fears, which are a part of

their mental heritage, with a new sense of values, new types of experience, and a new social and political régime, all of which result from contact with Europeans and European civilization.

The people of West Africa have not altogether abandoned their old outlook on life, nor have they completely assimilated a new one. Adjustment is necessary so that they may have a sense of values and feel confident of their ability to make a success of life. Such adjustment involves making full use of their mental and physical background, assimilating into that background new ideas, which may improve their plan of social and individual life, and acquiring the detailed knowledge which will assist them to exercise wisely their power of discrimination and choice during the process of evolving a form of civilization, which may enable them to take their place in the modern world.

It is to education that people naturally turn as the readiest means for bringing about such adjustment. But it must be remembered that teachers cannot dictate how people ought to live and act. Society must decide that. In the case of a British colony it is the Government which initiates policies on behalf of society, and teachers may be called in to explain and popularize such policies, which may make for health, prosperity, and well-being.

In this teachers cannot act alone; they must work in co-operation with the other departments of Government, all of which are concerned in one way or another with the economic, social, and political development of the country and its people.

We may now consider very briefly some of the ways in which education may be used to facilitate this adjustment.

In the first place, the ideal of education should be to develop and build on what already exists rather than to act on the assumption that the pupil's mind represents a *tabula rasa*, to be filled in by the teacher. This was the assumption upon which the early pioneers in education

worked, because they were ignorant of the mental background of their pupils.

It is too late now to do much in the way of linking up education as we know it with indigenous systems of training, many of which were admirable for their purpose, because those systems have fallen very largely into disuse, and it would be resented as reactionary by the Africans if there were any serious attempt to revive them.

But there is still a great deal of indigenous tribal custom, which can be brought into the educational system and used as the foundation for further knowledge and experience, and the schools can have a distinctive character whereby the local atmosphere may be preserved. For example, in matters of dress, in organization of pupils according to natural groupings, in the observance of local customs, which may afterwards form the basis of history lessons, in insisting on the correct type of salutation to those in authority in the tribe and in the school, in many ways, great and small, the life of the school can be linked up with the life in the larger unit of clan or tribe.

Much of the educational technique which has been evolved in this country as a result of years of research and experiment can be applied to the educational process in Africa, but modifications may be necessary in view of local conditions.

The Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies, whose Chairman is the Under-Secretary of State and whose members are men and women of educational experience and repute, have issued various memoranda for the benefit of the local Governments in these Colonies. Many subjects important for our purpose are dealt with and a great deal of useful advice is given.

It is impossible in the short space of a lecture to comment on all such subjects discussed in the memoranda. For example, very little will be said in this lecture about higher education, which is of great importance in West Africa and which has naturally engaged the attention of the Committee.

It may be that the very important subject of training

professional men—especially medical men—in the West African colonies will form the subject of lectures under this bequest on a future occasion.

This evening we will confine our attention rather to those educational activities which affect the population as a whole, rather than to those which are concerned with the very few who rise to the top of the educational ladder.

Now in a very important Memorandum on the Education of African Communities it is suggested that the school should be used to improve the conditions of life in rural areas, that in fact its influence should be extended to the whole community, and that it should provide a centre of propaganda for improved methods in agriculture, hygiene, arts and crafts, and other branches of human activity.

In many parts of West Africa the village school is indeed gradually becoming the centre of light and learning. The closest possible co-operation is of course maintained between the school authorities and the experts of the various Government departments.

Let us first consider the subject of village agriculture. It is not always easy to persuade a West African farmer to try out improved methods of agriculture demonstrated on Government experimental stations, but if the children in the school cultivate food and economic crops, making use of methods which have been tested by the experts and found to be an improvement on the local method, they will naturally compare the results with those on their fathers' farms and incite their fathers to give the new methods a trial. They are likely at any rate to adopt them when they have farms of their own.

In areas such as Northern Nigeria, where mixed farming involving the use of ploughs and cattle is being introduced, it is hardly possible for a school, of comparatively young children, to experiment with it on their school farm, but they can be taken to visit the successful mixed farms of peasant farmers who are being instructed by Government agricultural officers, and be taught in the classroom the principles involved.

Now the West African peasants who cultivate their own

food crops are in many areas suffering from serious food-deficiency, and the schools can be of real service—especially boarding schools, but to a lesser extent also day schools—by growing under supervision new crops which will provide the food-value which is lacking.

The study of dietetics has not proceeded far enough in West Africa for final recommendations to be made, but when it is known how the people of each area can obtain a properly balanced diet through their own exertions and without a disproportionate increase in the manual labour involved, the schools will be very useful propaganda centres.

Next as to public health. The subject of hygiene has long been taught in the schools, but too often from text-books which pay more attention to the names and descriptions of bodily organs than to the simple principles of health.

In order that teachers shall have a really practical grounding in this subject, training centres for village school-teachers are often constructed in the form of a West African compound, where all the conditions of home life are reproduced. The teacher there learns how to apply hygiene in the school, in his own home, and in the village. In some places, as an act of social service, the pupils undertake the task of cleaning up the village streets at regular intervals and burning refuse. In many instances they have built latrines and incinerators for the use of the whole village. The advice and assistance of the medical officer of the area is of course sought and freely given in regard to such projects.

In one West African school for older pupils the principal and the medical officer of the district hit upon the plan of building a model village as a permanent example of what can be done by simple construction in materials easily obtainable locally.

A portion of forest land belonging to the school was first cleared and then the village gradually sprang up—houses, court-house, churches, schools, dispensary, and mission station—in accordance with a carefully prepared plan. All the buildings were to scale, the height of the living-houses

being 2 feet. The boys entered into the spirit of the experiment and spent a great deal of their spare time on the project over a period of several months. In the process many useful lessons were learnt. The practical application of hygiene came in at every stage, and estimates of quantities and building to scale provided a good deal of practical mathematics. There was not a single process, either in the planning or in the execution, in which the pupils did not take a leading part. The result is exerting a considerable influence upon village planning in the immediate neighbourhood.

This experiment is typical of many similar activities undertaken by schools, and such projects do provide one way of helping the people to adjust conditions of village life to the standard necessary for improving the health of the people through means which are not too costly or difficult.

Another sphere in which the schools can help is in fostering and improving African arts and crafts, which sometimes reach a high level of skill. There is a danger lest the indigenous arts and crafts be ousted by cheap machine-made articles imported from Europe, and the schools are doing very valuable work in fostering them and introducing improved methods.

By means of exhibitions of school work interest may be stimulated, and schools weak in craft work may learn from those which have specialized in it.

Through their arts and crafts Africans in the past have found a scope for self-expression and for the creative urge, and it would be detrimental to mental health if they were to lose interest in such activities or divert it wholly into channels which are quite alien to their inherited mental tendencies.

It should be noted that men's work and women's work is differentiated in West Africa as in other parts of the world, and this fact should be taken into consideration in planning the instruction provided for boys and girls respectively.

It is of course also necessary in West Africa, as elsewhere,

that girls at school should be prepared for the special duties and responsibilities of women in the home. There are some institutions in West Africa attended by girls for a few months only before marriage, where the emphasis is less on the literary side of education than on home management and the upbringing of families.

I have given a few examples of how a school can be a centre for the education of African communities. There are many other ways, as, for example, in training both children and adults in the employment of leisure. It is not too much to hope that all West African village schools of the future will house well-organized libraries and that in their premises will be installed village radio sets, when broadcasting to rural areas becomes financially possible. The schoolhouse is already sometimes used for lectures, debates, and village meetings.

Much of course depends on the village schoolteachers, and the training of these men and women is one of the most fundamental tasks of the education authorities. Upon them will depend to a large extent the success or failure of the masses to adjust themselves to the changes inherent in this period of transition.

And now we come to the rather difficult problem of adjustment necessitated by the weakening of the old tribal sanctions for conduct and the adoption of new sanctions provided by an alien religion. Conduct in primitive society was regulated by complicated but well-known rules of behaviour, and the transgressor went in fear not only of punishment at the hands of men, but of retribution in this world by the unseen powers. So the individual's conduct conformed generally to the pattern approved by the tribe or unit to which he belonged. Now, almost everywhere in West Africa, as a result of European contacts, tribal sanctions have been weakened and there has been a steady growth of individualism which in many cases has made the exercise of authority by tribal leaders somewhat difficult.

It is practically certain that the animistic beliefs of

primitive Africa will gradually disappear, and what is to take their place? There can be no real health of mind for the individual unless he has a philosophy of life, and although there are many people in Europe who have succeeded in fashioning a philosophy of life not based on religion, they have done so from within a society which has built up traditions and standards of conduct upon a revealed religion.

In Africa the missionaries first introduced a European form of education and it was based upon the Christian religion. They held the field for a considerable period before the Government stepped in to direct educational policy and participate in all branches of the educational system. But even before the missionaries from Europe arrived, Islam had spread far and wide.

In some parts of the continent Islam swept over primitive society and implanted a religious, social, and legal system. Although many of the old superstitions remained, it linked up its adherents in the vast brotherhood of Islam, a religion which professes to be a revealed religion, a religion of the book—the source of its teaching and its inspiration. Islam is more accommodating than Christianity in admitting much of the primitive superstitions, and, moreover, the position of polygamy is barely affected by it.

What is the policy of Government in the West African colonies with regard to this question, and how can education assist in the matter?

In general terms the policy of the British Government is to allow the inhabitants of the colonies perfect freedom of choice as to religious beliefs, but in one of the memoranda, drawn up by the Advisory Committee on Education mentioned just now, it is made clear that religion should hold a central place in the educational systems and that every opportunity should be afforded to the Christian missions for the propagation of the Christian faith, so long as no compulsion is used and nothing is done which is contrary to the expressed wishes of the people and their rulers.

In accordance with this principle of freedom of choice in religious matters, Islam is taught in the schools of Northern

Nigeria, which are financed by the funds of the Native Administrations, although there is nothing to prevent Moslems from sending their children, should they so desire, to mission schools. The opening of mission schools, however, in purely Muhammadan districts can only be sanctioned by Government if the consent of the Native Administrations has first been obtained. In areas which are not completely Muhammadan, in the sense that Islam provides in them the basis of the administrative and legal as well as the social and religious systems, missions are quite free to establish stations and open schools.

In Southern Nigeria, Sierra Leone, most of the Gold Coast, and the Gambia, where a considerable proportion of the people are adherents of one or other of the Christian Churches, religion becomes literally a central feature in mission schools, while in Government institutions, unhampered by anything corresponding to the Cowper-Temple Clause in this country, it is often arranged for denominational religious teaching to be given by representatives of missionary societies, attendance of course being optional.

This question is one on which the Government cannot make final pronouncements, as the people of each country will ultimately make their own decisions as to religious beliefs and religious observances. It can, however, be a matter of present policy for the education authorities to establish and maintain the place of religion in education, and, while not departing from the principle of complete freedom of choice in religious matters, to provide full opportunities for the pupils in the schools and colleges to find in Christianity a faith which may satisfy the African's feeling of dependence on a supreme and transcendental authority, and provide for the individual that philosophy of life which may help him to solve the major and minor problems of the workaday world. It is surely a fact that complete harmony of mind, which is an essential condition of adjustment in respect of the conflict of loyalties and ideals which results from the clash of African and European cultures, will be unobtainable unless the spiritual nature

of man finds its satisfaction in religion. Whether such satisfaction can alternatively be found in Islam or indeed, as is sometimes suggested, in a developed form of animism, is a question which cannot be discussed in this lecture.

We must now consider how scope can be given to the ambitions and aspirations of West Africans in the political sphere and the part which education can play in political development. It is but recently that attention has been seriously directed to the effect of European administration upon race-consciousness, but it is a very important aspect of the problem of adjustment with which we are dealing.

Let us trace briefly the normal course of events when a country in Africa comes under British control.

In the first place a skeleton staff of Europeans is immediately mobilized; but the officers who form the administration are few in number, and are fully occupied in the primary task of maintaining law and order. Much is left to the individual chiefs and rulers, and the white administration does not penetrate very far below the surface. It may be, as was markedly the case in the Sudan after the battle of Omdurman, that freedom from the yoke of oppression is accompanied by a sincere feeling of relief in the minds of the masses of the people, and the new Government is welcomed with very real satisfaction. Then follows a period in which administration becomes closer and prosperity increases through the marketing of African products and the gradual introduction of the country into the vortex of world trade. Development leads to an increase in the number of administrative officers, and specialists are required as well. This appointment of additional staff increases the number of people who exercise authority of one sort or another.

At the same time, with the advent of education, which starts slowly amongst the reluctant and rather suspicious inhabitants and gains ground rapidly when the material advantages of European knowledge are manifest, there is a growing tendency for people to begin to think of rights and privileges. They hear and read of the application of

the principle of self-determination in various parts of the world, and they begin to look eagerly for some manifestations of the policy in their own country. They are inclined to forget that a few years' tutelage is not sufficient to enable them to hold their own with other nations who enjoy a social and political life that is the result of centuries of evolution. Moreover, they ignore the fact that twenty or thirty years of educational development does little more than raise up a small class of educated individuals, while the masses of the people are still only partially affected by it, and that before anything like self-determination can be realized there must be formed a sound public opinion, which will act as a check on whatever form of local government is evolved. The tendency to look with impatience at the slow grinding of the mills of government is found both amongst the native rulers who, under European supervision, exercise responsibility for the welfare of the community, and also by some educated men of the younger generation who, having no inherited right to authority, see in education the means of acquiring power and influence.

The local potentates note with alarm that whereas, when the white men first took over the government of the country, the number of administrative officers was very small and the powers wielded by the chiefs were correspondingly large, after some years of administration the European officers are far more numerous. Whereas to start with a single administrative officer acted as adviser to the Paramount Chief, now, with the country divided up into districts, there may be found administrative officers advising and directing the activities of the subordinate chiefs. This is a particular cause of irritation to the Paramount Chief, because he feels that his influence is being undermined and that his subordinate chiefs take their instructions from administrative officers rather than from himself.

Now in order to show how administrative policy can be directed towards relieving this very natural anxiety of the native population, I propose to make a few remarks upon

the difference between what are known as direct and indirect forms of Native Administration.

In a sense, all British government in the African dependencies is indirect because the pre-existing machinery of administration is absorbed in the government organization, which has obviously to depend to a very great extent upon African assistants to carry out its functions.

But the distinctive feature of indirect rule, as adopted by Lord Lugard in Northern Nigeria and developed by Sir Donald Cameron in Tanganyika and later in Southern Nigeria, is that Native Administrations do exercise initiative in administrative action including, like municipal governments in this country, and subject of course to necessary safeguards, the raising and spending of money for administrative purposes. Indirect rule is a progressive process, and as Native Administrations learn by experience and prove their competence the scope of their authority becomes enlarged. It is an educational process whereby the people of a country can familiarize themselves with the art of government in local affairs and gradually qualify by experience for some form of national government.

It is in fact a retracing of the steps described above whereby native rulers have, during the first few decades of British rule, lost instead of gained in administrative authority.

It is, moreover, quite different from the direct administration of French colonial policy, which—to quote from Dr. Mumford's instructive book *Africans learn to be French*—‘so far from developing a local government which is intended in time to separate from the Metropolitan (the British aim) aims at an even closer association with the Mother Country’.

In French colonies the existing chiefs and headmen may be and often are used to carry out government policy, but the position of Africans in authority becomes gradually that of members of a civil service whose duty it is to interpret in all things the wishes of head-quarters, rather than to determine policy within the limits of the powers allotted to them.

In some of the British colonies in West Africa indirect rule in the true sense of the term has not yet been attempted. Indeed, a very varying degree of political development will be found in the colonies of the West African group. In some, Native Administrations have as yet no powers of raising and spending money for the purpose of general administration and the increase of social services. Without financial responsibility Africans can make no very real progress in the art of government.

Now I want to make it quite clear that in essence indirect rule is local government. The form that local government takes depends on the structure of the particular society in which it is put into operation. When society is organized on a tribal or clan basis under a chieftainship, that form is the basis of local government. But where society is organized on a tribal or local basis under a council of elders, as is the case in some parts of Southern Nigeria, then that is the form which is adapted for local government. In either case the form of local government must be capable of evolution to enable it to cope with more complex social and economic problems; it must also be susceptible to change in accordance with the more democratic ideas which are a result of a gradually rising standard of general education. Already in such areas as Northern Nigeria there has been since the British occupation a steady development of local government machinery to meet the needs of a more highly organized society.

A recognition of these essential features of indirect rule is vital to the consideration of the problems discussed by Professor MacMillan in his penetrating analysis of the conditions in mining areas. In a new type of society, consisting of a settlement of people from many tribes, some even from other colonies, no intelligent disciple of the theory of indirect rule would attempt to base local government on tribal chieftainship. In such a settlement it would be necessary to devise some form of local government which was acceptable to the members of the settlement. Professor MacMillan has done good service by

calling attention publicly to this problem, and it would seem necessary that steps should be taken to find a form of local government appropriate to these conditions. This task would best be entrusted to administrative officers with anthropological training and experience.

If education is to be of assistance in the political sphere, those responsible for it must know quite clearly what are the political ideals of the colony, and they must feel assured that the policy will be continuous and not subject to alteration in accordance with the particular bias of those who are at the time responsible for it in the various colonies.

The main principles of indirect rule have been accepted both by the Mandates Commission of the League of Nations in regard to territories held under British Mandate, and by the Colonial Office on behalf of the British Government in regard to the British colonies in Africa. What would seem now to be required is a clear statement of how these principles should be translated into action in the various colonies. This, of course, would involve an impartial examination of the present position in each of them, showing what degree of indirect rule has been achieved up to date. As a result of that examination programmes of advance might be sketched for each colony, and some authority might be charged with the special task of seeing that the necessary steps are from time to time taken by the local governments in accordance with the programmes laid down.

In the introductory chapter of *The African Survey* by Lord Hailey, which was published recently, the formation of a Colonial Council is suggested. After discussing the kind of council which would be most appropriate for the purpose he has in view, Lord Hailey comes to the conclusion that there should be—to quote his own words—‘a Standing Committee of the Houses of Parliament specifically charged to report periodically on the affairs of each Colony or Protectorate on the basis of the official reports or any other public material brought to the Committee’s notice. Such a body might also, following the

procedure of the Permanent Mandates Commission, examine representatives nominated by the Colonial Office to appear before it to explain matters arising out of the reports.' Later in the chapter he says: 'A Standing Colonial Committee would be of little value unless Parliament specifically charged it with the duty to report at stated intervals on the affairs of each Colony on the basis of the material which it would be the formal duty of the Colonial Office to present to it.'

This proposal, if adopted, might have far-reaching results, but it is to be hoped that the council would not be limited to the consideration of material presented to it, but that it should also be empowered to ask for any such information it required and that it should from time to time issue a statement with regard to policy in the colonies, not in general terms only but in regard to the application of such policy in the various colonies and protectorates. Such a council might indeed, working in close co-operation with the Colonial Office, become the British Government's watchdog in regard to colonial policy. It might, as one of its responsibilities, be charged to see that in the application of the principles of indirect rule a programme of development was laid down in respect of each colony and protectorate, and that progress from one stage to another was undertaken when local conditions made progress to the next stage possible.

Where Government policy in regard to the methods of administration is clearly defined, it is for education to influence public opinion, both by helping the people to see what are the Government's intentions and by making them feel responsible for the success of the policy.

It is not the case that in this respect education is being subjected to a political theory as it is in the totalitarian State. True education must assist in the development of the individual's personality and powers of discrimination. It will in fact prepare him for the responsibility of making his choice between political theories. But the system of indirect rule is not a political theory. It is rather an

educational process of training the inhabitants of a country to assume those full responsibilities which they do not at present possess, because they are not yet qualified by knowledge and experience to assume them.

And so in the education of the masses of the people our aim should be directed towards making the individual realize his personal responsibility in the sphere of local or tribal government. For this purpose the pupils at school may be taught the elements of political philosophy in the simplest terms.

In West Africa, where primitive conditions still survive in many areas, it is not hard to demonstrate the growth of authority from that of the father of the family, through the authority of the clan, to that of the larger unit whether tribal or territorial. The limitation of the individual's choice of action through the necessity of combining for defence purposes can be shown from the history of tribal society before the arrival of the white man. Hence the necessity for law and order and government. The particular application of indirect rule in the tribal areas can be discussed and the pupils in the school familiarized with the relationship that exists between the local government and the central or British Government at head-quarters. The necessity of taxation, the need for sound public opinion which will not tolerate corruption, the part that the individual can play in the machinery of government by service on councils—such subjects as these can be included in the instruction, and they can come quite naturally in a syllabus of geography and history, which, in many of the schools in West Africa, are treated as one. Already an experiment along these lines is meeting with considerable success in Nigeria, and the pupils in the schools take a great interest in the subject.

It is not desired that education should make people politically minded, in the sense that they will be continually thinking and talking about political ideals which because of the still undeveloped state of society are yet far beyond their reach. Rather this political philosophy should be related to personal service to the small community in which the

people live. In accordance with the ideals implicit in *The Education of African Communities* already alluded to, the school can be made the centre of community life and the children at school can be encouraged to lead the way in fostering through personal service a community spirit, in which co-operation for the common good is the watchword. By this means the people of the country will gradually learn to adjust their ideas about an alien domination to a conception of government which, while influenced by much that is foreign, can be made to square with the ambitions of a gradually growing race-consciousness.

Again, local governments must employ specialists in various forms of government activity—medical, agricultural, engineering, veterinary, and so on. It is for the education authorities to see that trained Africans are available for service with Native Administrations, and an African who has been wholly or mainly trained in his own country, and so has not lost touch with the spirit and traditions of his people, is much better able to perform the duties of his office in a way which will not upset local sentiment and tradition.

It is often difficult to bring into association for implementing the policy of indirect rule the class of tribal chiefs and leaders with those who have attained high educational standards and are inclined to look down upon the somewhat primitive machinery and trappings of a Native Administration, and yet it is only by an infusion of modern knowledge through the co-operation of educated men and women that these same Native Administrations can develop sufficiently to cope with the problems of the modern world into which the West African colonies are being brought and from which they cannot be excluded. And it is chiefly through their efforts that a proper synthesis can be effected between the new and the old, and a way found for preserving the sanctions and the dignity of tribal authority, while the machinery of government is being expanded so as to make it adequate to cope with the ever-developing social and economic structure.

Education departments in West Africa are beginning to

turn out men qualified to serve as specialist officers or as civil servants in the offices of the Native Administrations. And as regards Africans in the civil service of the British Administration, opportunities should be given where possible for them to attend meetings of tribal courts and councils of which they may be members.

It is necessarily a long and difficult process to bring influences to bear upon a whole population, especially in countries in which the public press and the other means for educating public opinion used in Europe have as yet not been extensively developed. Much can be done through the schools of the country to explain to the rising generation the why and the wherefore of the changes that are taking place. Another method of influencing the masses is through Africans who have themselves had the advantage of a good education and have thereby earned for themselves positions of prestige and responsibility. These educated Africans can exert a great deal of influence upon the people of their own race who have not had the same advantages as themselves, and opportunities therefore should be sought for enlisting the support and assistance of the educated classes in West Africa for the benefit of the uneducated masses. This is a matter which it is suggested should be considered by those responsible for educational policy.

Now there are three institutions of higher learning in West Africa—the long-established Fourah Bey College in Sierra Leone, Achimota in the Gold Coast, and Yaba in Nigeria.

It would, I think, be of great value if trained anthropologists were available to give courses of lectures at these institutions on the elements of anthropology and to lead discussion classes on those aspects of tribal life and primitive society in which the matter of adjustment is likely to be most difficult. If this were done, the students of these institutions, many of whom are destined to become prominent in one or other of the careers open to them, would be better equipped for helping their less highly educated brothers to adjust themselves to the changing conditions due to European contacts.

There remains one aspect of this problem to which sufficient attention is seldom given. It is that the Europeans residing in the country, both officials and other residents, can by their attitude towards Africans facilitate the process of adjustment, or on the other hand they can make it more difficult. A great deal of the uneasiness that is felt by West Africans to-day is due to the impatience of those Europeans who do not take the trouble to understand the Africans' point of view. It sometimes happens that Africans imitate the manners and customs of Europeans with whom they come in contact, and instead of sympathizing with this effort to minimize the difference between them, the Europeans resent it, because almost unconsciously they take pleasure in the feeling that they belong to a superior race, and so are critical of anything which tends to bridge the gulf between European and African. This feeling of superiority, flattering to self-esteem, accounts in some measure for the preference often shown by Europeans for service in the more primitive districts, where the superiority of the white man is unchallenged.

It is the same feeling that is behind the opinion, sometimes heard expressed, that education is spoiling the African. It is certainly true that, as a result of education and the experience they are gaining of colonial administrative methods, Africans are becoming better able to stand on their own feet, and, consequently, the task of the European administrator is now becoming more difficult than it was when the control was more directly in his own hands. Government service in West Africa now requires high qualities of mind and character and a belief in the future of the peoples of Africa.

There are, however, many Europeans, official and unofficial, who do help greatly by their sympathy and understanding, their recognition of African aims and ideals, and their readiness to assist the African at moments when he appears awkward. Without this sympathetic assistance freely given by the Europeans who are in constant touch with West Africans both in the course of work and in social relationships, it will be difficult, and in some cases almost

impossible, for them to attain fully to the adjustment which we have been considering.

In this lecture I have to some extent strayed from my terms of reference. I was asked to expound the ways and means by which education can assist the people of West Africa to adjust themselves to the changing conditions due to European contacts, and I have devoted a good deal of the time allotted to me in discussing political development in the West African colonies. My excuse is that the educational function cannot be and is not exercised solely in schools and colleges. Every British officer in Government service and every British resident in the country is influencing every African with whom he comes in contact. He is introducing him to various aspects of Western civilization and in many cases training him as an assistant in various activities which were not undertaken before the white man came to the country. The problem we are considering is how to help West Africans so to adjust their outlook on life that they may absorb from Western civilization what will make for general happiness and prosperity, while retaining their essential character as inhabitants of West Africa.

Education can indeed, as I have tried to show, contribute to the solution of the problem, but the work of education in this respect must be shared by the whole British administration in supporting the West African people, with their sympathy and practical assistance, in their efforts to arrive at a reasonable conception of life and conduct in West Africa of to-day.

One word in conclusion. There is evidence, both in this country and in West Africa, of growing interest in the problem which we have been discussing during the course of these lectures. That it should be selected for consideration as one of the broader aspects of hygiene points to a recognition of the fact that true health is concerned with body, mind, and spirit. Indeed, without their unfettered and harmonious development mankind cannot attain to fullness of life.

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